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NON
CIRCULATING

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Am

Gift of
Ms H. Russell





A

DICATION
OF THE
RED BOOKS
AND OF
SEPHUS,
IALLY THE FORMER,
FROM VARIOUS
PRESENTATIONS AND CAVILS
OF THE CELEBRATED
DEVOLTAIRE.

this that darkeneth counsel by words without know-
e? JOB xxxviii. 2.

BY

ROBERT FINDLAY, A. M.
ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF GLASGOW.

GLASGOW:

PRINTED BY ROBERT AND ANDREW FOULIS,
AND
SOLD BY J. GILMOUR AND SON, J. BARRY,
AND THE PRINTERS.
M.DCC.LXX.



4

E F A C E.

give a short account of the rise and progress of this work, while it gratifies the curiosity of the reader, may at the same time suggest some ideas to those, who are disposed to censure the manner of the publication, or perhaps the presumption of attacking so distinguished a writer. It is the case as follows. When the Authors of the Monthly Review for July 1765 gave a translation of the whole forty ninth chapter of Mr. Voltaire's Philosophy of History, as a specimen of that work, perceived so many falshoods in it, small as its compass was, that I wrote out a detection of them in measure at such an attempt to mislead the world; and having done this, I transmitted it to the Editor, with the view of its being made public, to some able judges there, to whose examination it is subjected, should upon perusal approve it. For I hoped, that the Author himself might be taught, should it fall into his hands, to be more honest and cautious in his future details from antient books; and at any rate, that others might be thereby guarded against blind and implicit reliance on his accounts for the time to come, because it exhibited to them some glaring instances of misrepresentation in him. These persons were so far pleased with it. as

lany, and for this reason procured its admission into the Universal Museum for the month of December in that year, with the running titles which they appointed for it.

Towards the end of the year 1767, again, when I first read the book, I formed a more extensive scheme; even that of shewing, the Author had through it, been many times guilty of a gross disregard to truth and candour, both in his recitals of Josephus the Jewish historian, and in his quotations or narratives from the sacred writers, which I considered as one good expedient for defeating the religious tendency of his compositions, with which he made any pretensions to fair and equitable in their way of thinking; and the more that it could not be supposed he had condescended to just dealing with these authors to that he had taken like unjustifiable liberties with the treatises, where he made any mention of them. Soon after, in prosecution of this design, I made some remarks upon his injuries to the same monthly collection, in which they were also very readily received, by the subscription of it for January and February.

Thus I was going on with my plan, happy in the thought that the objections reported to be in very great numbers were likely to fall in with the public, and among those, of some weight, might need a caveat against Mr. Voltaire as their author, who would be apt to neglect to shew he was

R E F A C E.

ns about such matters. But I
t material mistakes, through which
ld be destroyed or altered, would b
s, on account of my distance from
notwithstanding all reasonable care and
a on the part of the editors.—I lik
aw, that the animadversions concerning
tment of the scriptures, would become too l
and critical for that channel of conveyance
ne world, considering the fashionable taste, and
readers of Magazines, unless I would satisfy m
with a more slight and superficial examination of
points which occurred in the piece, than I este
necessary for answering my end.—Finally, I lo
the succeeding summer, my long kind and n
honoured friend Dr. Lardner, so justly famous thro
the Christian church, for his Credibility of the
pel History, and his Jewish and Heathen Testimo
and thereby, the great advantage of his judic
perusal of my remarks, ere they were communic
to the public; as indeed some of them were in his
tody at his death, but since that, were obligingl
turned, at my desire, by his executor, a nephew
law, Mr. Joseph Jennings. The effect of these th
was, that I determined to break off publishing in
miscellaneous and monthly performance, nay ab
quit thoughts of doing it in any other shape.

Having been, however, toward the conclusio
winter 1769, more fully convinced, partly by
own observation, and partly by conversation w
others, who neither wanted discernment nor op

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be a real and important service to mankind, to expose the more striking instances of his errors, and misrepresentations in matters relative to our Christian system of faith; and, withal, considering, that a new edition of his whole works had been lately advertised by ~~him~~ in Scotland, by which their baneful efficacy would be more generally diffused in this corner, where providence has ordered my situation, I so far began to think it might be useful to execute the scheme I had hitherto but in a comparative light entertained, in a separate treatise, as to impart to some worthy friends at home, who all commend the intention as excellent, and them, more especially, animated and encouraged amidst some hesitation, to the undertaking.

Since that time, therefore, I have resolved upon this measure; mean while enlarged the manuscript beyond its former limits, to omit other * additions, wherein I had confined my animal philosophy of History, I hereon insert some † other of my productions, which were formerly

• The additions in the first part of the *injuries to Josephus*, may be perused with the papers printed in the

† The other works of Mr. *passages*. are his *Treatise on the Philosophy*.
Phi

these are not few, because he
 accounts or unjust glosses, in
 and again,) but even of some
 wholly new and distinct from
 with. Besides, upon this deter-
 his injurious reflexions and ca-
 ticity of this or that canonical
 parate place, and bestowed u-
 and accurate examination th-
 some slight attention had b-
 three of them, in laying open
 tions of the sense of Scripture

I have been abundantly sen-
 in meditating this criticism on
 that I could not write in his cr-
 ly manner; far less enliven my
 of humour and raillery; ne-
 been discouraged by the strong
 inequality. For it seemed to
 duty, to use such talents of
 God had conferred upon him
 cause of truth and piety, thou-
 of an adversary to it, in a liv-
 of expressing his sentiments: th-
 of mankind will hearken and
 ment, tho' it may not be recom-
 its delivery. It occurred to me,
 ed abilities for ridicule and wit,
 to escape the charge which
 gainst some advocates for Chri-

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 Essays Literary
 on Toleration

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 nal size. For,
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 ons to the Phi-
 notice of several
 Voltaire's literary
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 hich treat of Mr Voltaire's
 any person who compares it
 I have censured some
 his Philosophical Dictiona-
 his ignorant

these are not few, because he
 accounts or unjust glosses, in
 and again,) but even of some
 wholly new and distinct from
 with. Besides, upon this deter-
 his injurious reflexions and ca-
 ticity of this or that canonical
 parate place, and bestowed u-
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 some slight attention had b-
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 tions of the sense of Scripture

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 in meditating this criticism on
 that I could not write in his cr-
 ly manner; far less enliven my
 of humour and raillery; ne-
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 inequality. For it seemed to
 duty, to use such talents of
 God had conferred upon him
 cause of truth and piety, thou-
 of an adversary to it, in a liv-
 of expressing his sentiments: th-
 of mankind will hearken and
 ment, tho' it may not be recom-
 its delivery. It occurred to me,
 ed abilities for ridicule and wit,
 to escape the charge which
 gainst some advocates for Chri-

far from the :

ing Mr. Volt:

steel them against the force of the evidence.

evinced his great neglect of veracity and fairness where religion is concerned.

I have further been aware, that some persons who may exceedingly need a caveat and preservative against the pernicious tendency of this author's writings, are apt to be disgusted when they see a book written in opposition to these irreligious fallies which he hath interspersed in his publications swell to a size as the present, and merely on that account to treat it with contempt. For, impatient of attention of mind to moral and spiritual subjects, equally averse to much expence of time upon them, however lavish they may be about some things that are trifling and when laid in ballance therewith, they have the defences for truth and Christianity and concise as the sneers and oblique squirts out against them. But not being disheartened from giving articles in Mr. Voltaire, upon the subject mentioned, a more ample and large work, indeed, I have had a sovereign that cast of mind in studying a single exception and mistake, the same could not be the justice I owed to the subject, or stops for the occasion, where they are disposed to proceed.

a book
 which
 such
 account
 of much
 objects, and
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 representation, and, where
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nefs of a book, or the truth of
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 antiquity; and yet, a just refusal
 being capable of being brought w
 compass, may require a great n
 like manner they should attend,
 false account of a writer's mean
 with facility in a sentence or two
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 will be needful for his vindicati
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 take in, that the sense put upon
 sult of a wild and perverse expla
 that another construction, which
 to derogate from his praise and
 true and genuine one which the
 ought not therefore to be prepo
 swer on the side of religion, pu
 pies more room than the objecti
 tion to which it is opposed; and
 words thereof must be recited,
 no complaint of wrong done by
 must always increase in some me
 ry considerably, the length of h
 sides, I herein intend a service to
 much nobler and better temper
 on good grounds that the script

vention they may fall, or into what
may cast their eyes; nay, they even
knowledge of their futility and falsho
bled to put to silence gainfayers, wh
thority, or traduce the contents of th

Hitherto I have not seen any p
could supersede the propriety of
shew Mr. Voltaire and the pu
faults which I have presumed t
thereby to frustrate the aim of
of his writings. Only in th
zine, or Treasury of Divine
vember, 1766, and four suc
with ' A Confutation of the
' produced by Mr. Voltair
' chapters of his Treatise
' whence he endeavours t
' tolerated by God among
plain from the title of th
tioned, the design of its
reference to the justifi
Voltaire's abuse or wr
contracted and circur
formed. Nor did fi
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against Mr. Voltaire, at home
 a nature as to afford any argume
 it; though I have endeavoured
 on *, that I might forbear troubling

* The result of my enquiries here is short
 des Sciences et Beaux Arts, tom. 18. 176
 entitled, Observations sur les Savans Incrédul
 on Learned Infidels and some of their Writi
 But all I find there is, that this author attack
 veral others, upon some historical articles, bu
 lian the apostate, and, after exposing the fault
 he observes, some modern unbelievers have
 taire to reconcile his own assertions concernin
 seeing in one place he hath pronounced him
 reason, (Infidèle à la foi, Fidèle à la Raison;
 hath affirmed, that he disgraced or disparage
 ment to Theurgy or superstition.—In the Ap
 of the Monthly Review, which ends with Jun
 another foreign book, whose French title sig
 ' the Philosophy of History of the deceased M
 ' fictitious name for Mr. Voltaire) necessary
 ' that work with advantage,' and which was
 the beginning of that year. But, according
 pendix, while he depreciates Mr. Voltaire as
 the learned languages except the Latin, as
 ties that has appeared since the revival of l
 first principles of criticism, as guilty of false
 fence of religion expressly to those whose b
 the precious depositum of the faith, and co
 where he produces his proofs of these repre
 loaded Mr. Voltaire, within the bounds of en
 to their 38th volume; again, it is said; there
 in the same year, the Antiphilosophical Dic
 at 2

To some, however, it may appear too late to oppose any thing now to the irreligious passages in Mr. Voltaire's writings. For they will say he hath made a public recantation of them all; and in proof of this, they will appeal to his Letter to the King of Prussia, in which he exhorts him, 'Support, by edicts, and example, religion as a revelation from heaven, and founded upon a thousand prevent the progress of evil, and form you to be able to withstand the impression of lity and libertinism;' and, after having many praises on religion for its usefulness, concludes thus, 'You have desire in this world, Sire, but the Christian Hero. My wishes for you

tion there made of it is, 'It contains a short of our religion, and an answer to objections; the author is often without knowledge also, as I think, there was advertised in the Philosophical Dictionary for the poet M. de Voltaire, with notes containing are any ways exceptionable in reserved in either of the Reviews nor am I even sure, though I such confutation as the title of other pieces have been published to the same end as theirs. However, since I ed that there were prior year, 'Letters from 'taire,' in the French my mistakes, in what he has advised Testament. A

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 by your
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 nd proofs;
 youth so as
 of incredul-
 ving bestow ed
 ulness and im-
 e nothing *fit to*
 he august *side of*
 your majesty have
 ort view of the evidences of
 ons against it. The zeal of
 ge and discretion. Last year,
 in the London Chronicle, The
 ket, from the French of Mon-
 ng a refutation Of such passages as
 gard to religion: but I have not ob-
 hitherto, any account of its nature;
 wrote to a friend ad about it, whether any
 jasta of is really there attempted. If any
 lished which might be supposed to be di-
 nat which I propose, I am unacquainted with
 his sheet was sent to the press, I have learn-
 ed at Paris before the beginning of the present
 me Portuguese and German Jews to M. de Vol-
 ch language; wherein the authors point out ma-
 ncies, contradictions and misrepresentations in
 rning the Jews and the writings of the Old
 vol. of M. Review, pag. 562.

May you, Sire, give the wor-
 ample of the sublime virtue
 Publicly disavow, as I do at pr
 principles, and impious opinio
 ' wife be transmitted with your v

But, to omit that there is reason
 this letter be genuine, of which
 the time are mentioned, since i
 by an unknown D. L. to the aut
 Country Magazine, who says a
 from a foreign nobleman in En
 reveal his name, (although ind
 certain of its authenticity;) and
 er reason to make this doubt, bec
 freshest and most credible accou
 Voltaire is bargaining from time
 lers about new editions of his wo
 recting, or cancelling any offen
 To pass further, that where he
 in it, he seems to use the ten
 sence, seeing he defines the deist
 with the religious man, not to
 nies the scriptures; but a person
 ' the existence of a supreme be
 ' universe, maintains that this fi
 ' and too high, to cast his eyes o
 ' attend to the works of a crea
 ' digent as man;' which looks

* This Letter, to which I refer, was
 tal miscellanies, and may be read in the Sc
 pp. 576, 579. where it was republished
 Magazine.

before dark and obscure to them; by rescuing from the exceptions, or scorn of sceptics, some which they have objected to, or derided, and by explaining the genuineness and authenticity of any of its parts more fully and satisfactorily, while they proceed under the animating power of such religious persuasion to bound more and more in the fruits of righteousness (for which ends I sincerely desire, and pray for divine blessing upon it,) I will think my labour well laid out, and richly rewarded; and may more easy and unconcerned under the cross shall suffer, either with regard to the matter of work, or to defects in the manner of its performance. If not, I will at least have the satisfaction from a conscious sense of having aimed at truth will they who may disallow or doubt the truth and purity of intention, deny that I have employed agreeably to my office and duty.

As to the Appendix which is for the defence of the credibility of the gospel, Voltaire's exceptions to its truth, the omission of the murder of the innocents, and miracles; by Jewish laws, which I thus consider apart, I will mine and refute in the words of the sacred book, as hath been done alone as immediately to the question of genuineness or authenticity. I have to have printed an appendix concerning that false prophet, the first Christians by

it is a de-
 against Mr.
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 cacious writers;
 the cavils I exa-
 against this or that
 intimated, are such
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 mans, which this same au-
 places of his works; but espe-
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on; where he also pre-
 , from the days of Rom
 Christians began to dispu
 empire, there was not a
 rson being persecuted on
 nents, but all religions were p
 examining so many passages
 tions, besides all these which
 sed to be remarked on in the
 this work hath increased und
 sent size, it seemed more expe
 sign, and the rather, because t
 been completely distinct from
 handled.

Through the whole, I hope
 I have not treated Mr. Voltair
 verity and sharpness of expres
 tended to avoid this, whate
 might be to it on many occas
 proofs of a bigotted and bl
 ty. Far from wishing him
 may enjoy all happiness; and
 may become a firm believer
 these rational grounds on whic
 sent, and with diligence obey:

JUNE 30, 1770.

b

T H E I N T E N T S.

P A R T I.

Antaire's injuries to Josephus. page 1

S E C T. I.

in chapter twenty-fourth of his *Philosophy*, that the Jews called their city *Jerusalem*, and that the Greeks altered it to *Jerusalem* according to Josephus. 2

S E C T. II.

in chapter twenty-fifth of the same, Josephus owns *Moses* received his laws from *Mount Sinai*, where also Dr. Middleton's assertion, that he does not insist on any divine authority of *Moses*, that he had no inward conviction of it, is considered. 5

S E C T. III.

same and defective account of Josephus's pre-
sentation to *Vespasian* in chapter thirty-first. 14

S E C T. IV.

his misrepresentations in chapter forty-fifth;
where he affirms that Josephus makes *Daniel* go-
vernor of three hundred and sixty provinces, and
Orabel a Jewish slave, an intimate friend of the
kings, and very imperfectly relates his ac-
count of *Darius's* question, and of the answers of
his academy of wits. 16

S E C T. V.

gether with his unjust reflect

S E C T.

Of his assertion, that Josephus
book of Job among the wr
canon, in chapter forty-sev

S E C T.

Of his concluding, in chapte
Jews did not call Jacob,
Israelites, till they were fl
a passage of Philo.—And
phus owns the practice of
ed from the Egyptians, :
ny of Herodotus.—Tha
unknown by the Greeks
tivate letters.—That he
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phus, which he does no
ference from these stor

P A

Of Mr. Voltaire's misre
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Of his misrepresentation
may plead the author

SEC. I. Of his saying i

Philosophy of Hist

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SEC. II. Of his repres

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occasion of the s

- § III. Of his making, in chapter forty-third, God direct Ezekiel to cover his bread with human excrement, and thereafter with the excrement of oxen. 58
- SEC. IV. Of his saying in the same chapter, that the Lord threatens by Amos, that the cows of Samaria shall be put into the caldron. 64
- SEC. V. Of his inference from certain psalms, that the Jews were of a sanguinary disposition; and of his misquoting one passage, and perverting another, in their Psalter, to prove that they were a carnal people, in chapter forty-fourth. 66
- SEC. VI. Of his affirming in his Treatise on Toleration, that Ezekiel speaks of pigmies, persons not above a cubit high, 80
- SEC. VII. That the Vulgate translation favours these accounts, which Mr. Voltaire hath given, is no sufficient apology for his fairness and candour. 83

C H A P. II.

- Of his misrepresentations of scripture, for which he cannot plead the authority of any translation. 89
- SEC. I. Of his saying that the Jews are reproached for copulation with he and she-goats in the desert, and forbidden the same, in chapter second of his Philosophy of History. 99
- SEC. II. Of his making Jephtha and Jeremiah acknowledge the divinity of Melcom and Chamos, in chapter fifth of his Philosophy of History, and in other works. 98
- SEC. III. Of his asserting there and elsewhere. that

was the prophet of another God,—that Jeremiah, Isaiah, &c. were ill-treated, because it was difficult to distinguish between false and true pretenders to the prophetic character,—that Hosea declares the prophets fools,----that the prophets treated one another as visionaries, there being no other method to separate the true from the false, but by waiting for the accomplishment of the predictions.

229

SEC. XVI. Of his ill-founded reflexion in the same chapter, that Elifha's reply to Benhadad's servants was equivocal, 'That he might recover, but that ' he would die.'

237

SEC. XVII. Of his saying that 'little innocents' were devoured at Bethel for words which they said to Elifha in 'laughing.'----That Isaiah walked three years quite naked in Jerusalem.----That Jeremiah was only fourteen years old when he was employed as a prophet, and that he prophesied in favour of Nebuchadnezzar.---And of a mistake in his account of God's order to Hosea.

244

SEC. XVIII. Of his enumeration, in chapter forty-seventh, of popular prejudices, to which the sacred writers conformed,---That the Scripture calls the rainbow the ark of God,---That Moses erected a brazen serpent, a God whose look cured,---That Christ says, new wine should never be put into old casks,---That Paul says, the seed is not quickened, except it die,---and that Christ grants, the Pharisees dispossessed devils.

253

SEC. XIX. Animadversions on his forty-eighth chapter, where he writes, that Satan appears in Job master of the earth, subordinate to God; and that

Satan is a Chaldaean word, and the Arimanius of the Persians. 260

SEC. XX. Of his asserting in the same chapter, that some have imagined Enoch left a written history of fallen angels,—That the false Enoch is cited by St. Jude,—and that the book of Enoch and Genesis agree perfectly in the copulations of the sons of God with the daughters of men, and in the race of giants their issue. 266

SEC. XXI. Of his saying in the forty-ninth chapter of the same work, that the Jews, according to their own confession, were not circumcised till the time of Joshua; upon which occasion also, the assertion by this writer and others, that the Jews borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians, is examined. 277

SEC. XXII. Of his assertion in his Philosophical Dictionary, that it was customary among the patriarchs to use an obscene rite in making a promise. 325

SEC. XXIII. Of his misrepresentation of Paul and Peter's conduct at Antioch, in the same work. 327

SEC. XXIV. Of his false relation there of Peter's behaviour to Ananias and his wife, and his censures thereof; together with the observation he ascribes to Erasmus, that the head of the Christian religion began his apostleship by denying Jesus Christ. 332

SEC. XXV. Of his account, in the same piece, under the article Resurrection, of James's advice to Paul about observing all the ceremonies in the temple, that he might persuade every person he still continued to conform to the law, and of the effect of it. 342

xxvi THE CONTENTS.

SEC. XXVI. Of his remark, under the same article, upon Paul's exclamation before the council, 'Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question,' 347

SEC. XXVII. Of his asserting in the same place, from 1 Theff. iv, that the first Christians made themselves sure they should see the end of the world; and of his saying, that Luke actually foretells it as what should happen in his life-time. 365

SEC. XXVIII. Of his saying in the Ignorant Philosopher, that Christ's words, Mat. xviii. 17. were the cause of all persecutions among Christians. 373

PART III.

Of Mr. Voltaire's false reflections on some of the sacred books. 389

S E C T. I.

Of his saying, that some thought the first book of Samuel a composition so late as the monarchy of the Greeks, in his Philosophy of History. 389

S E C T. II.

Of his charge against Daniel's prophecies, as forged after the destruction of the Persian empire by the Greeks, in the same Philosophy of History. 394

S E C T. III.

Of his calling, in the same work, our book of Job an Hebrew translation of an Arabic original, and denying it to be a Jewish book. 407

S E C T. IV.

Of his reflections, in his Philosophical Dictionary, against the genuineness of Solomon's writings. 445

S E C T. V.

Of his insinuation that Matthew's Gospel was not

T H E C O N T E N T S. xxvii

written till after the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, from the mention of Zacharias's death. 477

S E C T. VI.

Of his calling Toldos Jeschut quite contrary to our gospels, and making it a more antient writing.

487

The Conclusion.

515

A P P E N D I X.

Concerning Mr. Voltaire's remarks upon the silence of cotemporary writers about the massacre of the infants, the star, the miracles of Christ, the darkness and other prodigies at his death, which are recorded by the evangelists,

527

E R R A T A.

Page 32. l. 20. *after these words*, have done, *add*, and might fancy that Job lived when that calamity was at no great distance, as some others have thought, among whose arguments, &c.

Page 65. l. 22. *for* יָרַח *read* יָרַח.

Page 180. l. 6. from the foot, in note, *for* object, *read* subject.

Page 422. l. 13. from the foot, *for* many, *read* mercy.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is not the intention of the following sheets, to detract from Mr. Voltaire's real excellence. He is indeed, I acknowledge, a most elegant, easy, and spirited writer, who abounds in many just and noble reflections, conducive to banish ignorance, persecution, and ferocity of manners out of the world, and to spread knowledge, liberty, and civilization among men. Accordingly, his works are read with great avidity, and holden in high esteem by all in the present age, who make any pretensions to taste and refinement. Nevertheless, amidst all these agreeable and useful qualities, he appears to me often chargeable with a disregard to truth and candour, upon some interesting subjects which he handles. In particular, I think, he frequently shews a want of veracity and fairness, where he speaks of the Jewish historian Josephus, whose works, notwithstanding several things in them liable to exception, are of much service to us Christians. For, as they confirm the truth of the accounts of his nation contained in the Hebrew scriptures, so they acquaint us with the civil and religious state of Judea, at the time of our Saviour's appearance; they inform us, there was then a general expectation of a great person to arise among the Jews, built upon prophecies in their sacred books, whence many assumed the character, promising to bestow upon them those advantages, which they fondly wished to receive by him. And, which is a principal advantage we derive from them, they bear very large and copious testimony to the fulfilment of Jesus's predic-

Thereafter, I will point out far more numerous wrongs he hath done the sacred writers, by misquoting or misinterpreting their words; which may serve to rescue them, together with some persons whose characters they celebrate, from that unreasonable scorn and displeasure, which he intended by these arts to excite against them.

Finally, I will consider and refute some unjust reflections, or innuendos, which he hath thrown out against different canonical books, in order to preserve due honour and regard for them.

And, surely, every impartial judge will agree, the more accurate in his researches, the more upright in his narratives, and the more candid in his conclusions Mr. Voltaire shall be found, upon the whole, about other matters, the less excuse and apology must remain for an opposite conduct and behaviour, where he treats of things generally revered, yea of things in their nature and consequences supremely important, since, upon such subjects, the greatest attention and candour ought in all reason to have been manifest and conspicuous.

which were finished by him in the twenty-sixth year thereafter, being the thirteenth year of the reign of Domitian, and the fifty-sixth of his own life. And his later treatise, in two books, Concerning the Antiquity of the Jews against Apion, in the first of which he establishes the early rise of his nation, from the writings of the Phenicians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, and even of the Greeks themselves, and confutes the calumnies cast upon them by Manetho, Chaeremon, and others; and in the second he proceeds to disprove the slanderous charges of Apion himself, against them and their rites. This Apion was an Egyptian grammarian, and one of the commissioners on the part of the Gentiles in Alexandria to Caligula the emperor, when the whole Jewish people living there sent an embassy to Rome, to complain of the injuries they had received, but he was dead ere Josephus wrote.

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
SACRED BOOKS
AND OF
JOSEPHUS
AGAINST MR. VOLTAIRE.
PART I.

OF MR. VOLTAIRE'S INJURIES TO JOSEPHUS.

I BEGIN with the injuries done by Mr. Voltaire to the Jewish historian, and I take them all from his Philosophy of History, though I bring my proofs of the succeeding parts of my complaint against him, not only from this, but from several other of his literary compositions.

It requires greater pains to justify the reproach of disingenuity and bad faith against our author here, that he seldom obliges his readers with any direction in what book and chapter of Josephus's works, the passages are to be seen which he professes to cite or build on. But with chearfulness I submit to the additional trouble which this vague and loose manner of reference creates, that I may convict him of unfair dealing, and furnish an effectual caveat against a

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blind dependance upon him, and a precipitate resignation of the understanding to the light he hangs out about those antient facts which have any connection, more immediate or more remote, with divine revelation. Perhaps some may examine the charge of such abuse of a writer merely human, and allowed by all to be under no superior guidance, more impartially; and by finding it made good against him, may be more disposed to listen to the same accusation of him, for trying to mislead the world by false accounts and explications of those authors, whom Christians maintain to have been favoured with inspiration more or less plenary.

SECTION I.

Of his saying in Chapter twenty-fourth of his *PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY*, that the Jews called their city *HERSHALAIM*, and that the Greeks altered it to *JERUSALEM*, according to *JOSEPHUS*.

TO enter then upon this branch of my task, I will first remark upon his detail in chapter xxiv.* ‘ Josephus himself, in the book against Appion, acknowledges that the Greeks could not pronounce the barbarous name of Jerusalem, because the Jews pronounced it Hershalaïm: this word grated the throat of an Athenian, and it was changed by the Greeks from Hershalaïm to Jerusalem.’ But where hath Josephus said that the Jews

* Page 116 of English Translation, printed at Glasgow 1766, which I always quote.

called the metropolis of their country *Hershala'im*? or that the Greeks, unable to pronounce so harsh a word, altered it into *Jerusalem*? I find indeed, in his first book against Appion, he quotes * a passage from a treatise upon sleep by Cleanthes, a famous peripatetic philosopher, where Aristotle is introduced, saying, 'That the region which the Jews possess is called Judea, and that the name of their city is very crabbed or uncouth, for they call it *Jerusalem*.' And this I suppose to be the place Voltaire had in his eye, as it is the only one which seems to have any relation to the matter. But how far is it from affording any sufficient handle for his story? The plain sound of the Hebrew term is *Ierushala'im*, or *Ierushalem*, as it is variously pointed. Accordingly, all Greek writers, both those who are now lost, in their testimonies produced by Josephus, as Manetho, Dios, Menander, Berofus, Lyfimachus, Hecataeus, Agatharcides, and those who are still preserved, as Strabo, Diodorus, &c. call it *Ierosolyma*, without any intimation that they made such an alteration as he speaks of, to accommodate it to the ears and lips of those among whom they lived. Even Lyfimachus, who had said that the first settlers in Judea named the city which they built and inhabited, *Ierosula*, from † their carrying thither the spoils of the temples of the gods, which he makes them to have destroyed in their retreat from Egypt, confesses, that their posterity, having waxed powerful there, in process of time changed the name of the

* Edit. Hudson, sect. 22. p. 1347; *Όνομα πανυ σχολιον ειπυ, 'Ιερουσαλημ γαρ αυτην καλυσι.*

† Ibid. sect. 34. *Quod ιερα σεσυληκασι*, says Hudson.

city into Ierofoluma, that they might not, in its appellation, furnish any handle to upbraid them for such sacrilegious plunder. The falshood of that tale however, is easily manifested by repeating Josephus's observation with a view to confute it: ' This fine
 ' writer *, says he, through his too keen desire to
 ' calumniate us, did not consider that we Jews do
 ' not express robbing temples by the same word as
 ' the Greeks, for what more need be said against one
 ' who lies so impudently?' And, in like manner, another of these writers whom Josephus quotes, Agatharcides, expressly affirms †, ' That the natives or
 ' inhabitants of the country, called the city Ierofoluma ;' as the attentive reader must have observed Aristotle say, that the Jews called the city Ierusalem, in the passage itself which Voltaire is thought to allude to.

* Sect. 35. Edit. Hadf. 'Ο δε γενητος ὑπο πολλῆς τῆς λαιδορεν ἀκράτειας ὑποσινκει ὅτι ἱεροσολεὶν ἢ κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν φωνὴν Ἰουδαῖοι τοῖς Ἕλλησιν ὀνομαζομεν, &c.

† Ibid. sect. 22. 'Ην καλεῖν Ἱεροσολύμα συμβαίνει τῆς εὐχῆς.

SECTION II.

Of his saying in Chapter twenty-fifth of the same, that JOSEPHUS owns MINOS received his Laws from a God, where also DR. MIDDLETON'S Affection, that he does not insist on any divine Authority of MOSES, nay that he had no inward Conviction of it, is considered.

BUT let us now proceed to the detection of a falshood more important. Says Voltaire, chap. xxv. * 'Flavian Josephus does not hesitate saying, 'that Minos received his laws from a god. This is 'a little strange in a Jew, who, it should seem, ought 'to allow no other god than his own, unless he 'thought like the Romans his masters, and like all 'the first people of antiquity, who allowed the existence of all the gods of other nations.' With the sentiments of the Romans, and other idolatrous nations, on this point, I have at present no concern. My business now is only to enquire, whether Josephus hath allowed such divine authority to the lawgiver of Crete. This I confess would appear to me not a little strange, as Voltaire pronounces it: but altogether inconsistent with his character as a Jew, who professed to believe that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the God of the universe, and that there was none besides. But there is no reason for imputing such an absurdity to him. What he says is 'Our 'lawgiver, Moses, was not a juggler or impostor, as 'they say, reviling us unjustly, but such a one as the

* See page 118.

‘ Greeks * boast Minos to have been, and after him
 ‘ other lawgivers ; for some of them said their laws
 ‘ were of divine original, Minos at least referred his
 ‘ laws to Apollo and his Delphic oracle, they either
 ‘ thinking it was so in reality, or supposing they
 ‘ would easily persuade the people of it :’ which is no
 more an argument that Josephus thought Minos re-
 ceived his laws from a god, than it would be an evi-
 dence that a Christian judged Mahomet to be a di-
 vine messenger and instructor, if he should say that
 Jesus was such a person as the Turks believed Maho-
 met to have been.

So much for Voltaire’s reflection. But the recital
 of the passage furnishes a natural occasion to observe,
 that Dr. Middleton hath from it imputed such senti-
 ments to Josephus concerning Moses, as are too de-
 rogatory to his honour to pass uncensured ; for he
 maintains, † ‘ That Josephus here does not insist on
 ‘ any supernatural or divine authority of Moses ; but
 ‘ ascribes all the great things done by him to his own
 ‘ personal skill and management, putting him on the
 ‘ same footing with Minos, and the other old law-
 ‘ givers of Greece, and giving him the preference on-
 ‘ ly on the comparison, for the superior excellency
 ‘ of his laws.’ With what injustice he does so, is evi-
 dent in part already ; but to obviate further any bad
 impressions which his assertion may make, I add, that
 as Josephus often speaks of the divine inspiration and
 mission of Moses, so he does in that very place, ac-

* Contra Appion lib 2. sect. 16. page. 1376. Αλλ’ οἱον παρα
 τοις Ἑλλήσιν αὐχεντι τον Μινω γεγονεναι, &c.

† See Middleton’s works vol. 3. 8vo. Defence of Letter to Dr.
 Waterland, page 95.

cording to all MSS. declare his conviction of it; while Middleton, in preference to their authority, follows the reading of the old Latin translation, which the learned * Joseph Scaliger hath censured as the work of a most unskilful and ignorant interpreter; nor can the accusation be denied to be well founded. The historian's words are, ' There being in Moses a ' virtuous intention and great achievements, we ' reasonably concluded, that he † had a divine leader ' and counsellor, and being persuaded himself that ' he acted and meditated all things according to his ' will, he judged it behoved him especially to inspire ' this opinion into the multitude, for they who be- ' lieve that God inspects their lives, do not allow ' themselves to neglect any duty.' † If he say, after the

* See the preface to Hudson's edit. ' Josephus Scaliger, recenti-
' orum doctissimus, veterem Flavii interpretem imperitissimum appellat.'

† Edit. Hudf. 1376 Εἰκότως ἐνομιζομένῃ ἡγεμόνα τε καὶ συμβυ-
χον θεοῦ εἶχεν. Middleton with the old translator reads ἐνομιζεν, which
makes Josephus declare only Moses's own conceit in the matter.

‡ These the Doctor hath represented thus, ' Such an one,' says
he, ' whose intentions were so just and noble, might reasonably pre-
' sume that he had God for his guide and counsellor; and having once
' persuaded himself of this, he judged it necessary above all things,
' to instill the same notion into the people, that every thing he did
' was directed by the will of heaven, not acting herein the part of a
' magician or impostor as some have unjustly accused him, but like the
' famed lawgivers of Greece, who, to make their good designs the
' more effectual, used to ascribe the invention of their own laws to
' the gods, and more especially like Minos, who imputed all his insti-
' tutions to Apollo and the Delphic oracle ' Letter to Dr. Waterland,
containing some remarks on his Vindication of Scripture ibid. p. 29.

But every one who is able to read the original, will see he hath
taken unjustifiable liberties in this translation which he hath here gi-
ven. For besides making Josephus only tell Moses's own belief, that he

passage a little ago produced from him, and introduced by the words just now recited, ' Who of them ' constituted the best laws, and entertained the justest sentiments concerning the deity, all may learn ' from the laws themselves, comparing them with ' one another.' This is no proof that he imagined Moses had no claim to superior honour and respect, as alone of the two vested with a commission from the Creator of heaven and earth; it is only an appeal to the world about the equity of his pretensions, that he had a divine teacher.

I am aware the same great man, though he † owns Josephus speaks of the inspiration of Moses where the Scripture does it, from which he professes to copy, hath contended also that he had no inward conviction of it, because he varies remarkably from the Moisaic account in his narration of many facts, against his own solemn declarations of strict and rigorous adherence thereto. But does not Fabricius ‡ himself, to

was under a divine conduct, where, by all MSS. he expresses this to have been the sense of his nation, of which above, he omits what he hath about his great actions, and about his thinking it a duty incumbent on him from his knowledge of God's attention to his behaviour, to impress the people with a persuasion of his divine mission. And he disguises his plain meaning, that Moses was such in truth and reality, as the Greeks falsely boasted or bragged Minos to be. With the same view further he restrains the term rendered impostor, to signify one who used the pretence of miracles, to cheat and deceive for his own advantage, Defence of his Letter. *ibid.* p. 102. when yet it denotes a person, who puts a trick or fallacy upon another, from any principle. and with any design whatever.

† See Remarks on the Reply to the Defence of his Letter. *ibid.* p. 200.

‡ See Fabricius's *Bibl. Graeca*, lib. 4. cap. 6. or Hudson's editi-

whom he sends us for proof of these deviations from it, guard us against drawing this conclusion in his answer to Bayle, who from the same topic, had argued Josephus's opinion of the fallibility, and by consequence, of the non-inspiration of Moses? His reflection here seems to me very sensible, and removes, or at least greatly lessens the difficulty; on which account, as I do not recollect to have met with it in English, I shall here transcribe it: ' This notion, that
' Josephus did not believe Moses's divine authority,
' is not probable, says he, and is confuted by his own
' most exprefs assurances. I would rather hold, that
' being a Pharisee, he did not think he contradicted
' the sacred writers, when he most interpolated their
' accounts according to the traditions of his nation,
' or even wrote things repugnant to their true and
' natural meaning. How many are there among
' Christians, who, while they have expounded the
' sacred books according to their own preconceived
' opinions, have done the same thing, and still do it?
' Yet there neither was, nor is any doubt in their
' minds, concerning the divine inspiration of their
' authors. I will not believe that either Peter Co-
' messor, author of the Scholastic History *; or that
' Xavier the Jesuit, author of the Evangelical History
' for the use of the Persians, had any hesitation about
' the truth of the divine oracles, or that they can be

op of Josephus, who hath copied the whole chapter of that work into his preface.

* This contained an abridgement of the Scripture facts from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Acts of the Apostles, and was in great esteem and use from the twelfth century when it was published, till the Reformation.

‘ convicted from their own writings of entertaining
 ‘ any suspicion concerning this point, though they
 ‘ are not more accurate and exact than Josephus, in
 ‘ representing the sacred history.

He moreover appears to found * his opinion of Josephus’s infidelity upon these many passages in his Antiquities, where, having given a relation of some fact agreeable to Scripture, he subjoins, ‘ But about
 ‘ this let every one think as he pleases.†’ Or, ‘ But
 ‘ if any one will think otherwise about these things,
 ‘ let him possess his diversity of sentiment without
 ‘ blame.’ But will these passages bear all that stress which he lays upon them? It is evident Josephus uses this form of expression where he cannot be supposed either to have disbelieved or doubted the truth of the matter he writes of. To give an example or two, after refuting || their story, who affirmed that Moses and the Israelites were expelled from Egypt on account of the leprosy, by this argument, That then he would neither have subjected those who might labour under this disease to such incapacities, nor have imposed upon them such burdensome ceremonies as he has done in his law for their recovery from them; especially, as in some countries, persons infected with this malady, were crowned with honours both civil and religious: he adds, ‘ But about these
 ‘ things let every one think as he pleases.’ Again, having mentioned ‡ some more recent instances of the great reverence of the Jews for the law of Mo-

* See his Defence, p. 108, 109; and Remarks in reply to his Defence, p. 201.

† See his Antiq. 2. 18. 5. and 10. 11. Fin.

|| Ibid. 3. 11. 4.

‡ Ibid. 3. 15. 3.

ses, and one which happened only a little before the war broke out with the Romans, in the reign of Claudius and pontificate of Ishmael, about their abstinence from all use of a supply of corn which arrived at the passover, though the famine was so severe before, that an assar * had been sold for four drachmas, in order to shew the credibility of the Scripture accounts of the respect paid to their legislator, by the immense numbers whom he led through the wilderness, seeing the statutes delivered by him had still so great force and authority, that their enemies themselves confessed a divine establishment of their polity by Moses, he, in like manner, says, ‘ But every one will receive these things as to him seemeth fit.’ The true key therefore to these phrases appears to be, not that he rejected, or even suspected, the divinity of the Mosaic religion, but that he was de-

§ As I could not find this ancient measure in any tables of Arbuthnot and others, I was a while uncertain about its capacity, though desirous to explain it to the reader. I have, however, at last discovered, that Josephus translates by this term the Hebrew word *gomer*, which we turn omer, as indeed his Greek word *ασσαρι* is easily formed from the Hebrew *gnasharon*, which is used as equivalent to it, Exod. xxix. 40, &c. for the omer is declared to have been (as *gnasharon* signifies) the tenth part of the ephah, Exod. xvi. 36. thus, Antiq. 3. 1. 6. he uses it to express the measure of manna which was to be gathered for every man, which all know to have been an omer; now an omer is reckoned equal to $5\frac{1}{8}$ pints of English corn measure, being the tenth part of the ephah, which made three pecks, three pints, or a bushel and a half, sixteen pints going to compose the peck, and two pecks to form the bushel. By consequence, Josephus’s meaning is, that a measure of meal, containing about a third part of our peck, was sold at half a crown, the drachm being about seven pence half-penny of our currency. A great dearth indeed!

firous to obviate the prejudices of the heathens against it as unfociable, and against himself and his countrymen who embraced it as turbulent; and to wipe off the imputation, frequently cast upon them, as if they required that all men should renounce their opinions for theirs, and would not allow the world to live in tranquillity, without such a change in their faith†. And this point he might think more important to be accomplished, as they were then in a state of distress and affliction, through the belief which the Romans entertained of their restless and perverse temper.

As to the quotations which Dr. Middleton further brings from Philo, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Eusebius, to justify his hypothesis, That Moses had recourse to the fiction of having received his law from God, that he might give it greater force and authority, every one must be sensible it would require a long digression to examine them; the hypothesis which he urges them to support, must indeed seem very strange in one who professed himself a sincere friend to Christianity, and was vested with the character of a public teacher of it, after the clear declarations by Jesus, Paul, and Stephen, that Moses was a prophet of God; and the more strange, that, notwithstanding these, he pronounces the opposite scheme only a senseless‡ prejudice, which it becomes rational apologists for the gospel to destroy

† The same account Dr. Warburton gives of these expressions in the Jewish historian, which have a sceptical or libertine air, while in other passages, he hath all the marks of a zealous believer, as I have lately observed. *Div. Legation*, vol. 4. book 5. p. 274, and 280,

‡ See Dr. Middleton's Defence, &c. p. 71,

in this age, when it is so vigorously assaulted; even as a skilful engineer demolishes the weak outworks of a place he would defend, that serve only for a shelter and lodgement to the enemy, whence to batter it the more effectually. Nevertheless the accurate discussion of his arguments for it, as I aim at brevity, cannot be now undertaken. I will only therefore remark concerning Philo's * words, who is the sole Jewish evidence he offers after Josephus, 'Whatever Moses dictated to them, whether he had invented it himself, or received it from the deity, they imputed it all to God.' That they can never afford any good ground to conclude such was his creed, as he represents, since he must be reasonably thought there to express himself according to the principles of those enemies of their polity, with whom he had been arguing, when he speaks of Moses's having contrived his statutes himself, as in numberless other places of his writings he asserts his divine mission and guidance. And I refer to Pearce † for full satisfaction about the rest.

If this article hath been more prolix, it is hoped the

* Philo, apud Euseb Praepar. lib. 8 cap. 6.

† He at that time curate of St. Martin's in the Fields, and since bishop of Rochester, was, if I mistake not, author of the Reply to Dr. Middleton's Letter to Waterland, and of the Reply to his Defence of it, and shews, according to my information. (for I have not been able to procure a sight of these pieces,) that Clement of Alexandria, where he makes him speak of the Greeks borrowing from Moses the practice of lying, to serve the ends of government, intends no more than the use of stratagems of war against enemies; and that Eusebius Praepar. lib. 2. where he says there are infinite examples of fictions for the benefit of mankind in the books of Moses, only means metaphorical representations of God, as susceptible of human passions.

plausibility of Dr. Middleton's pretences for thinking that Josephus supposed Moses only to feign a divine commission, together with his distinguished reputation for literature, and the moment of shewing there was no solid foundation for such an inference about his sentiments, will abundantly vindicate it from any blame.

SECTION III.

Of his lame and defective Account of JOSEPHUS'S
Prediction to VESPASIAN in Chapter thirty-first.

THE next example I will mention of Voltaire's misrepresentation of the Jewish historian, is from his thirty-first chapter*. Having related Josephus's prediction to Vespasian, in the name of the God of the Jews, that he and his son would become emperors, and observed that hereby he ran no risk, he goes on, 'Vespasian informed this Josephus, that, if he were a prophet, he should have foretold him' (Voltaire should have said, himself) 'the loss of Jotapat, which he had ineffectually defended against the Roman army. Josephus replied, that he had in fact foretold it; which was not very surprizing. What commander, who sustains a siege in a small place against a numerous army, does not foretel that the place will be taken?' But is this a just account of Josephus's reply? far from it; though I mean not to defend the truth of the story about his prophecy, only to correct Voltaire's recital of the fact.

* Page 139, 140.

The historian's† narrative runs thus: ‘ When Josephus had foretold the advancement of Vespasian and Titus to the imperial dignity, Vespasian seemed at first to give him no credit, and suspected he spoke those things craftily, to save himself. But by degrees he was induced to believe he would be raised to the government by divine providence---He found also Josephus true in other things: for one of the two friends, who with Titus was present at this private conference, said he wondered that he neither foretold to the Jotopatans the taking of their town, nor to himself his being made a prisoner, if these things were not fictions from a desire to avert his displeasure. But Josephus answered, “ That he had predicted to the Jotopatans, that they would be taken after the forty-seventh day of the siege, and that he himself would be taken captive by the Romans.” These things, upon private inquiry of the prisoners, Vespasian learned to have happened, and began to believe his prophecies about his own preferment.’ Indeed Josephus was too wise to rest Vespasian’s faith of his prediction, that he would be exalted to the throne, upon the fulfilment of another prophecy by him, about the fate of that post, which he was employed to maintain against the Romans, so general, vague, and indeterminate, as that which Voltaire mentions. He easily saw it behoved him to make it more minute and circumstantial: he therefore represents himself to have shewed, that it would baffle and disappoint all the efforts of the enemy for forty-seven days; but that at the expiration of this

term, it would fall under their power: and farther he says, he pointed out his own fortune at a distance, that he would not be slain, but taken alive. Yet none of these particulars could any one divine from Voltaire's detail, important as they are, to give any shadow of reasonableness to Vespasian's reliance on his prediction of his future grandeur, amidst the appearances which it had of artful and interested flattery.

S E C T I O N IV.

Of his Misrepresentations in Chapter forty-fifth; where he affirms that JOSEPHUS makes DANIEL Governor of three hundred and sixty provinces, and ZOROBABEL a Jewish Slave, an intimate Friend of the King of Kings, and very imperfectly relates his Account of DARIUS's Question, and of the Answers of his Academy of Wits.

INOW pass over to Voltaire's forty-fifth chapter. This will furnish several instances of gross misrepresentation. I might observe, that he has no authority from Josephus's book against Appion, to assert, as he does, that his history of the Jewish nation met with a small number of readers, when it appeared at Rome. For he says in his preface, or dedication to Epaphroditus, ' That he wrote his answer to Appion, ' because he *saw many gave ear to slanders, which ' were thrown out by some through hatred, and did ' not credit his Antiquities; and used as an argument that their nation was of a later rise, that the

* *Επει δε ουχους ορω, &c.*

‘ illustrious Greek historians were silent about them:’ which leads rather to suppose, that he had a great number of readers, so far as it justifies any conclusion about the matter:---But I do not dwell upon this. He goes on a little after*, ‘ Josephus relates, that ‘ Darius the son of Astyages, had appointed the prophet Daniel governor of three hundred and sixty ‘ cities, whom he forbade, upon pain of death, to ‘ pray to any God for a month.’ But is this a fair account? The Jewish historian writes thus: ‘ That † ‘ Daniel was one of the three presidents whom Darius set over three hundred and sixty provinces; ‘ for he made so many.’ He is therefore silent about the number of cities, and does not represent him to have been vested alone with the government and superintendency of so many provinces, but to have had two others joined with him in rule over them. It is even probable, that the provinces are here swelled to three hundred and sixty, through a mistake of some transcriber, or, according to Hudson, through a slip of memory in Josephus himself, since Daniel, from whose book the relation here is in general plainly borrowed, intimates, that the empire was divided only into one hundred and twenty provinces. ‘ It ‘ pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred ‘ and twenty princes, who should be over the whole ‘ kingdom; and over these three presidents, of whom ‘ Daniel was first, &c.’ Further, Josephus himself makes the number of the provinces only one hundred and twenty-seven, in the reign of Darius† Hystaspes, about eighteen years after; when yet the empire had

* Page 216. † Antiq. 10. 11. 4.

‡ lb. 11. 3. 2. Compare Daniel vi. 1.

been enlarged by additional conquests through the interval.

It follows, ' Josephus seems to imagine afterwards, that all the Persians turned Jews.' But where is the foundation for this? For my part I can see none. It is true, that after mentioning Daniel's deliverance from the lions, and the destruction of them who accused him, laying snares for his life, Josephus writes, ' King * Darius sent through the whole country, praising the God whom Daniel worshipped; and saying that he alone was true, and possessed all power.' But surely every one must be sensible this is not enough to shew, that the historian entertained such a conceit, as is here imputed to him.

Mr. Voltaire proceeds: ' The same Josephus gives the sacred temple of the Jews rebuilt by Zorobabel, a singular origin. " Zorobabel, says he, was the intimate friend of king Darius." ' A Jewish slave an intimate friend of the king of kings! This is much the same as if one of our historians should tell us, that a fanatic of the Cevennes, released from the galleys, was the intimate friend of Lewis XIV.' How unjust this reflection, let every reader judge. Josephus indeed, when he begins to inform us how the second temple, the foundations of which were laid under Cyrus, was at last completed in Darius's time, (the progress of the work having been stopped in the intermediate reigns, through the artifices of the Samaritans, and other enemies,) speaks in this manner: ' This † Darius, son of Hystaspes, while he was a private person, had vowed to God, if he should be raised to the kingdom, that he would

* Antiq. 10. 11. 7. † Ib. 11. 3. 1.

‘ send all the vessels of God, which were in Babylon, to the temple in Jerusalem. But about that time,’ (the time of his being made king) ‘ Zorobabel, who had been anointed prince or ruler of the Jewish captives, came from Jerusalem to Darius, for he had a friendship of a long standing with the king; where being accounted worthy to be a body-guard to him also with two others, he enjoyed the honour which he hoped.’ Now where is the absurdity of this account of his friendship with the Persian monarch? Zorobabel, though a captive in war, was not adjudged as a public criminal and malefactor to some ignominious punishment, like Voltaire’s fanatic condemned to the galleys. Besides he was a man of high birth in his own nation, and of exalted rank: for in Cyrus’s decree, which granted liberty to the Jews to return, he is long before denominated governor or leader of the Jews, and hath a joint commission with Mithridate, the keeper of the king’s treasure, to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem; and a joint trust given him of the vessels which had been carried away to Babylon, though of immense value. His intimacy moreover with Darius, is not represented to have commenced after his elevation to the throne, but said to have been many years previous to it; for it was * a ‘ friendship which had been of old, or of long continuance,’ says the historian, speaking of the time when he was chosen king, after murdering with the assistance of others, Smerdis the mage, who usurped the crown as Cyrus’s son, through the well known stratagem of his groom. As incredible then as it is, that a fanatic released from the galleys, should

* Παλαιὰ γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ εἰλικία πρὸς τοὺς βασιλεῖς.

have been an intimate friend of Lewis XIV. who succeeded to the throne of France, in right of his descent from a long race of kings, there is no improbability at all, that there should have been a familiarity between Darius a Persian nobleman, before his election to sway the Persian sceptre, and Zorobabel a prince of the Jews; especially when we consider that we are certain some captives of this nation dwelt about Susa or Sushan, where that nobleman's father resided as governor. Have not persons, who have been prisoners by the fate of war, been often admitted to a familiarity and friendship with subjects of the most distinguished parentage, fortune, and station, in the country where they were detained? The fact cannot be denied.---It were therefore needless to bestow more words on exposing the futility of Mr. Voltaire's scoff here.

He goes on: ' Be this as it may, according to Flavian Josephus, Darius who was a very sensible prince, proposed to all his court a question worthy of the Mereure Gallant; namely which had the most power, wine, kings, or women? The person who gave the best answer, was to be recompenced with a flaxen† head-dress, a purple robe, a golden necklace, &c. Darius seated himself upon his golden throne, to hear the answers of his academy of wits. One entered into a dissertation in favour of wine, another was for kings, Zorobabel was an ad-

† So *κεφαλὴν ὑσσώπινον* is turned; but the expression denotes a tiara of fine linen. Now the tiara was a kind of turban rising up with a sharp point without bending, which was a dress peculiar to the Persian kings; for the other Persians wore their turbans bending downwards to their foreheads, in token of subjection. See Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. 5. p. 121.

advocate for women. "There is nothing so powerful as they; for I have seen, said he, Apamea the mistress of the king my master, give his sacred majesty gentle slaps on the face, and take off his turban to dress her head with." Darius found Zorobabel's answer so smart, that he immediately caused the temple of Jerusalem to be rebuilt.* But no more does Voltaire give a fair and candid relation here, than in former instances. The question was not proposed to all his court, but to his three body-guards. 'When the king,' says * Josephus, 'could not sleep any more, having soon awaked, he enters into conversation with his three body-guards; and promises, that upon him who should give him the most true and judicious answer to his question, he would bestow gifts,---as a reward of victory.---Having promised that he would confer those gifts upon them, he asked the first if wine had greater power; the second if kings; the third if women; or more than these, truth. After asking these things of them, he went to rest; but in the morning, having called the nobles and governors of provinces, and other rulers of Persia and Media, and having seated himself in the usual place, he commanded each of the guards, in the hearing of all, to declare his judgment about the question proposed: and having told us the answers of two of them, he adds, 'when thus the second was silent, Zorobabel the third, began to speak---and having finished about women, he began to speak about truth, saying, "I have shewed how much power women have: they, however, and the king are weaker than truth, &c."

* See Antiq. xi. 3. 2—8,

‘ And when he had done, and the multitude cried
 ‘ out that he had spoken excellently, and that truth
 ‘ alone hath power unchangeable, and which wax-
 ‘ eth not old, the king commanded him to ask some-
 ‘ thing besides these things he had promised.—After
 ‘ he had spoken these things, he put him in mind of
 ‘ the vow which he had made, if he should receive
 ‘ the kingdom, that he would build Jerusalem, and
 ‘ repair therein the temple of God, and restore the
 ‘ vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had plundered and
 ‘ brought to Babylon.’ “ And this, says he, is my
 “ request, which thou now sufferest me to ask, whom
 “ thou hast judged wise and intelligent.” Where-
 ‘ upon he gave orders to promote the work.’ This is
 a summary of Josephus’s history about this affair;
 whence every one must see, upon the slightest atten-
 tion, how different Voltaire’s account is from it. In
 this writer’s representation, there is not one syllable
 about the king’s inquiry concerning the power of
 truth, nor about Zorobabel’s decision in favour of its
 superior virtue and efficacy, which won him the ap-
 plauses of the audience, and gained from the king
 the tendered prizes, together with the invitation to
 ask something additional. Nor is there in him any
 mention of the monarch’s vow while in the station
 of a subject, probably through the ardour of his
 friendship to the prince of the captivity; which, to-
 gether with this man’s preference of truth to wine,
 and kings, and women, are set forth by Josephus, as
 the cause of his favourable edict concerning the temple
 in Jerusalem. In all which, the author of the first
 book † of Esdras agrees with him.—May I not then

† See first Book of Esdras, chap. 3. and 4. Such, however, is

say, how false and defective is his detail! how injurious to Josephus! and how willing to be deceived must they be, who rely upon him as a safe guide in antient facts, which have any connection with religion!

SECTION V.

Of his Falshoods in his Detail of JOSEPHUS's Story of JADDUA and ALEXANDER, in Chapter forty-sixth; together with his unjust Reflection on ROLLIN.

LET us next examine his forty-sixth Chapter, in which he is angry with Rollin for copying from Josephus, that romance-writer, as he calls him, the story of Jaddua's procession to meet Alexander; and his exhibition of prophecies to him, which clearly indicated that he would conquer the kingdom of Persia; stiling the same absurd, and considering it as framed to raise his nation. But is he satisfied to produce this story as it stands in the Jewish author, and to dwell upon the real difficulties with which it is incumbered? No. He alters it; and then proposes

the proneness of some men to misrepresent things here, for the sake of a laugh, that I have seen in a foreign gazette, the same lame and defective account of the answer of the three officers to his Majesty Darius from this author, as Mr. Voltaire hath given us thereof from Josephus: while a poetical translation of the arguments of orator Zorobabel to prove the superior strength and power of the fair sex is concluded thus, ' Thus far the eloquent Zorobabel. Be dumb ye modern orators! Neither lord Mansfield or lord Chatham ever spoke such a speech.' *Virginia Gazette*, printed by Purdie and Dixon, May 25th, 1769.

vain and groundless cavils against it. ‘ Josephus *,
 ‘ says he, pretends that Alexander had, in a dream
 ‘ at Macedon, seen Jaddus the high-priest of the
 ‘ Jews;’ (supposing there was a Jewish priest whose
 name terminated in *us*) ‘ that this priest had encour-
 ‘ aged him to undertake his expedition against the
 ‘ Persians, and that this was the reason that Alexan-
 ‘ der had attacked Asia.’ But how senseless this objec-
 tion, from the termination of the high-priest’s name
 in the narrative! Be it that *us* is not the termination
 of any man’s name in the Hebrew language, does
 not every person, who is at all acquainted with Jose-
 phus, know that he varies the termination of the
 names of other persons, from what it is in that tongue
 in the same manner? and yet against their real exist-
 ence, there never was, on this account, the smallest
 exception. Thus, † Joshua son of Josedec, is, with
 him, Jesus son of Josedecus; Abiud is Abius, &c. why
 then might not Jaddua be also with him Jaddus,
 without creating any suspicion of his genuineness?
 Nor does he affirm that this high-priest suggested to
 Alexander the design of subduing Asia, as Mr. Vol-
 taire’s readers may naturally imagine: what Josephus
 makes Alexander say, is, ‡ ‘ That, when he was de-
 ‘ liberating with himself how he would become mas-
 ‘ ter of Asia, he commanded him not to delay, but
 ‘ with confidence to pass over, for he would lead his
 ‘ army, and give him the empire of Persia.’ Mr.
 Voltaire goes on, ‘ He could not then avoid going
 ‘ six or seven days march out of his way, after the
 ‘ siege of Tyre, to visit Jerusalem.’ This is by way of

* See the Philosophy of History, page 220.

† Antiq. 11. 3. 10. and 3. 8. 1.

‡ Ibid. 11. 8. 3. 4. 5.

sarcasm, for he had said before, ‘ It was necessary,
 ‘ after having made Tyre submit, not to lose a mo-
 ‘ ment before he seized the post of Pelusium; so that,
 ‘ Alexander having made a forced march to surprise
 ‘ Gaza, he went from Gaza to Pelusium in seven
 ‘ days. It is thus faithfully related by Arrian, Q. Cur-
 ‘ tius, Diodorus, and even Paul Orosius himself, ac-
 ‘ cording to the journal of Alexander.’ But is there
 really such cause for scoffing? Josephus, whose rela-
 tion Voltaire means to ridicule, does not carry Ale-
 xander from the siege or conquest of Tyre to Jeru-
 salem, which, as this city stood at no great distance
 on the left hand of the road from Tyre to Gaza,
 would have been more favourable for the story of
 his interview there, with the Jewish high-priest; on
 the contrary, his narrative is, ‘ That, having settled af-
 ‘ fairs at Tyre, of which he became master after a
 ‘ siege of seven months, he marched to Gaza, and
 ‘ took it after sitting two months before it; and, that
 ‘ having destroyed this place, he hastened to go up
 ‘ to the city of the Jerusalemites†;’ which is mak-
 ing him turn backwards for several days; and, being
 inconsistent with that quick progress from Gaza to
 Pelusium, in which other historians agree, creates
 much embarrassment to those critics who maintain
 the truth of that visit. Why then does Mr. Voltaire
 lead his readers into a belief, that Josephus places his
 journey to Jerusalem before his attempt on Gaza?
 We may, however, easily forgive this misrepresenta-
 tion of Josephus’s sense, since he has probably been
 betrayed into it by following such modern writers
 as make this arrangement of it. For many think it

† Josephus’s Antiq. 11. 8. 3. &c.

more reasonable to suppose Josephus was mistaken about the order of time in which the journey to Jerusalem was executed, then to conclude the whole an idle fiction, merely because it is omitted by the few heathen authors now extant, out of the great number that wrote Alexander's transactions, who, they observe, must in general be thought to have entertained too much aversion and hatred against the Jewish nation, to preserve and perpetuate the memory of a fact in its circumstances and effects so honourable to them, whatever information they might have of its certainty. They conclude, therefore, Alexander went thither while his troops were employed in the siege of Tyre, or after it was finished, while the main army was refreshing; rather than that he first passed so considerable a fortress, and then went back from Gaza to take it in: which is making Josephus only guilty of an error in a circumstance, while they admit him a good voucher for the principal fact. Nor is this shewing him greater respect than is often paid to the single testimony of historians of approved credit. For upon such evidence we often allow the truth of a fact about which others are silent. Especially we do so when it is corroborated or supported by any appearances which are best accounted for from it, and of that kind is the present one. For Josephus informs us, that Alexander granted to them extraordinary privileges, the use of their own laws, and freedom from tribute every seventh year, as in it they did not cultivate and sow their lands. And Hecataeus, * a contemporary of this prince, as-

* His words, as he is cited by Josephus against Appion, 2. 4. are,
 ' Την Σαμαρειτιν χωραν προσειθηκεν αυτοις εχειν αφορολογητον.'

fores us, appealing to Alexander's letters, and other monuments in testimony of it, that he also bestowed upon them the country of the Samaritans, after they had mutinied, and murdered Andromachus their governor, with an immunity from taxes for its possession: which are indications they must have stood high in his favour.

After this, Voltaire having related Jaddus's order from God to salute this king, and his obedience to it, with Alexander's persuasion, that he was the same man who had instructed him seven or eight years before to come and conquer Persia, which he communicated to Parmenio, proceeds thus: 'Jaddus had upon his head his cap, ornamented with a plate of gold, upon which a Hebrew word was engraved. Alexander, who was doubtless a proficient in the Hebrew, immediately discovered the word Jehovah, and prostrated himself with humility, knowing very well that none but God could have this name.' In this manner he laughs, and leads his readers to think Alexander considered the high-priest as the Divinity. But Josephus having observed, that the name of God was inscribed on the plate of gold, (without marking whether it was Hebrew or Greek; though I suppose it was the former, wherefore Alexander would need to receive an explication of its import from others,) only says, that 'hereon he† worshipped the name, and saluted the high-priest.' So that he plainly distinguishes between his behaviour toward Jehovah, and toward his priest. Accordingly he acquaints us, that when

† Antiq. xi. 8. 5. Το τε Θεον ονομα εγγραπτο, προσελθων μοι
τος προσκυνησε το ονομα, και τον αρχιερα πρωτος ποτασατο.

Parmenio, as the king and he were alone, asked why he whom all men worshipped, worshipped the Jewish high-priest, he replied, 'I did not worship this man, but the God with whose high-priesthood he hath been dignified;' and that thereafter having gone up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God according to his direction, and bestowed upon the high-priest and the priests suitable honours.' Further, whereas Voltaire adds, 'Jaddus instantly displayed prophecies, which clearly indicated that Alexander would conquer Persia, prophecies that were ever made after the event had happened;' Josephus says no more than this: 'The book of Daniel having been shewed him, in which he declared that a certain person among the Greeks would destroy the empire of the Persians, thinking himself was the person signified, he with joy dismissed the multitude; and having called them to him on the succeeding day, he commanded them to ask whatever gifts they pleased.' And then adds, 'In consequence of this, he indulged them in the use of their own laws, and in freedom from tribute every seventh year, as in it they did not cultivate their land.' As to his charge, that the prophecies in Daniel concerning the destruction of the Persian empire by the Greeks, were forged after its actual overthrow, it does not now fall under my consideration, unless it be to remark, that it hath no foundation in Josephus, lest any person should suspect, strange as it may seem, that it was his suggestion, when it is wholly Voltaire's own sense of things. So much for the misrepresentations of Josephus in his forty-sixth chapter.

I cannot, however, forbear here to vindicate so

agreeable and profitable a writer, as Rollin, from a reflection which he hath thrown upon him in it. It is this: ‘ Rollin indeed says, that Alexander took Tyre, only because the inhabitants scoffed the Jews, and that God would avenge the honour of his people; but Alexander might have had still other reasons.’ By his manner of expression, a person is inclined to believe, that Rollin made Alexander to be actuated by a desire of chastising the Tyrians, for their injuries to the people of God. But does Rollin afford any reason to impute this sentiment to him? Far otherwise. He says in his *Antient History*, ‘ Tyre had now filled up the measure of her iniquity by her impiety against God, and her barbarity exercised against his people;’ and having recounted her insults over the ruins of Jerusalem, and her violence to the inhabitants of the land, and her seizure of the most precious things from the temple of God there, to enrich therewith the temples of her idols, he remarks, ‘ This profanation and cruelty drew down the vengeance of God upon Tyre.’ But though God had this intention in prospering his efforts against Tyre, he always supposes Alexander to have been animated by other motives, such as, his resentment at the affront the Tyrians put upon him, in refusing him entrance into their city when he asked it, that he might offer a sacrifice to Hercules its tutelar god, and the importance of his possession of it to his interest. For he thus expresses himself, speaking of the above-mentioned indignity: ‘ This conqueror, after gaining so many victories, had too high an heart to put up such an affront, and thereupon was resolved to force them to it by a siege.’

Again, ' Alexander imagined that there were essential reasons why he should possess himself of Tyre, * &c.' Indeed while Rollin had such veneration for the Jewish scriptures, as to acknowledge the interposition of Providence, in his determination to lay siege to the place, in spite of all the difficulties of the work, when according to the rules of war, after the battle of Issus, he should have pursued Darius with vigour, because God had therein denounced its ruin for its pride and other vices, he was too wise not to be aware, that Alexander, who knew not God and his oracles, was wrought upon by very different principles.

SECTION VI.

Of his Assertion, That Josephus does not include the Book of Job among the Writings of the Hebrew Canon, in Chapter forty-seventh.

TO return from this digression, which, it is believed, was due to so excellent a writer's merit, as nothing occurs in Voltaire's forty-seventh chapter that requires animadversion, according to my present design, I go forward to his forty-eighth chapter † where is a sentence too material to be overlooked, viz. That Josephus does not include the book of Job among the writings of the Hebrew canon. After affirming, that the book of Job was first written by the Arabians, his words are: ' Flavian Josephus, who does not include it among the writ-

* See Rollin's Ancient History, Book XIV. Sect. vi. pages 166, 167, 183, 184.

† Page 231.

'ings of the Hebrew canon, removes all doubt upon ' this head.' Accordingly he again asserts in the same chapter, that ' It is not a Jewish book,' * The same thing I know said cardinal Pezron, though I have never been able to see his book, or the arguments by which he contends, that it is omitted in the catalogue of the sacred books by Josephus.

But does there appear any sufficient evidence, that Josephus did not allow it a place in the sacred code of his nation? I apprehend not. It is surely of no force at all to prove this, that he makes no mention of the calamities which befel Job, and his deportment under them, and his deliverance from them, in the great work of his Antiquities; for herein he proposed only to write the history of the Jews from the earliest times, and to give an account of the constitution of their state. He might therefore be silent about his fortune and behaviour, who was of a different people and country, as appears from the beginning of the book itself, though it was a part of the Jewish canon, and honoured by himself as such. And of as little weight must it be to evince this, that he does not touch upon his character and affairs in his book against Appion; since here his sole aim was to vindicate the honour of his own nation, to which as hath been said, Job did not belong.

It is true, he † represents Moses to have written no more than five books, comprehending their system of laws, and the series of events and transactions from the formation of man until his own death. And he makes the prophets after Moses, to have written the acts and occurrences of their own times, from his

* Page 236. † Contra Appion, lib. 1. cap. 8.

death till the reign of Artaxerxes, the successor of Xerxes upon the throne of Persia; which is unfavourable to their hypothesis, who reckon Job to have been older than; or contemporary with Moses, and the book which derives its name from him, to have been composed by this person while he abode in the land of Midian, or while he led Israel in the desert; or even amidst his residence in Egypt; since none pretend to count it among his five books, which have been described. And an equally unfavourable aspect it hath upon their scheme, who have looked upon it as the production of Joseph; or any other of superior antiquity to Moses. Nevertheless all this affords no evidence, that the book of Job was not a part of the canon of Scripture among the Jews. He might notwithstanding know it to be so, and judge it to have been written, either by some prophet in, or near the time of the Babylonish captivity, as Grotius, Cadurcus, Le Clerc, and the learned bishop of Gloucester have done; among whose arguments, it may seem none of the most contemptible, that though he is twice mentioned by Ezekiel, as a person of distinguished piety and virtue, with Noah and Daniel, he is always mentioned after the last; while the other, as the order of time required, hath the precedence in the honourable band. Or, he might suppose it, if not written in so late a period, to have been penned by some prophet, who was raised up after Moses in the Hebrew nation, and coeval with the stranger, whose vicissitudes and patience are the subject of the piece. And in this view it may not be unworthy of observation, that Jerome in his letter to Paulinus, after finishing his account of Deu-

teronomy, and saying, ‘ So far Moses, so far the Pentateuch,’ introduces Job as an example of patience, ere he proceed to speak of the book of Joshua the son of Nun, and the rest. If indeed Josephus had said, that the prophets after Moses wrote the affairs of the Jewish nation, between his death and Artaxerxes’s reign, as Mr. Whiston gives his sense, in his supplement to his essay towards restoring the true text of the Old Testament p. 28, there could have been no room for this supposition; unless we should have said, he was to be understood to declare the theme of their writings in general, and not to express himself with rigour and strictness about the subject of them; since even in these books of theirs, which are unquestionably authentic, there are predictions and histories of the successes and disasters of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and other nations, where the Jews were not parties to the quarrel, as well as prophecies and histories relative to their own country and people. But there is no need of such solution, for Mr. Whiston’s account of his meaning is unfair—the import of the words being no more than this, That they wrote the acts of their own times; as every scholar may perceive, by casting his eye toward the foot of the page, where he will find the original text. Agreeably, the book of Job may be counted among the sacred books of the Jews, without swelling their number beyond twenty-two, which the historian has given as the sum of their code in whole; Yea, without increasing the books of their prophets that arose after Moses beyond thirteen, which he makes, in the passage transcribed † be-

† Ubi supra, ‘ Απο δε της Μωυσεως τελειτης μεχρι της Αβτα-

low, the amount of them. This is done by making the books of Judges and Ruth, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, the two books of Chronicles, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, and the books of the twelve prophets stand only for seven books in his catalogue. For thus Job's book is easily introduced among the thirteen books of the prophets, and no pretence left for saying, as Mr. Whiston has done, that the Canticles must be excluded from the Old Testament, to make room for its admission among the four books of hymns and instructions for the conduct of human life, which Josephus mentions as, with these thirteen, and the five books of Moses, constituting the canon of his nation. But upon what just and reasonable grounds, such a method of numeration is to be used, cannot now be explained, though the matter appears to me of great moment; for if we are once assured that these books, which now compose the Old Testament, were the received holy scriptures among the Jews, and neither more nor fewer, during the ministry of Jesus and his apostles, the inference will be certain and irresistible, that they are of divine† authority; because they who

‘ ξιζην—αρχης, δι’ μετα Μωυσην προφηται τα κατ’ αυτους πραχθεν
 ‘ τα συγγραψαν εν τρισι και δεκα βιβλίοις.’

† It is from a persuasion, that these books, which compose the Old Testament canon, had the sanction of our Saviour and his apostles as the oracles of God, and that there are other evidences of their inspiration, that Christians treat them with such respect, not merely because they were written by Jews. How injurious then is Mr. Voltaire, when he represents this as the foundation of our reverence for them, and faith in them, and then proceeds to accuse us of the most unparalleled inconsistency: ‘ We despise and abhor the Jews; and

bore a commission from heaven, and gave satisfactory proofs of it, appeal to them as such upon all occasions. Yet I do not know that it hath been shown hitherto, with that fulness of evidence which it allows. I only observe farther, ere I dismiss this article, that * Philo a Jew of great learning in Alexandria, brother to the Alabarch, that is, the chief magistrate of the Jewish people there, and of the race of that nation, who was cotemporary with Christ and his apostles, quotes the words of Job, in the same manner in which he produces passages from other books of the Old Testament, which he speaks of in the most respectable terms, calling them the sacred word, the divine word, the prophetic word, the sacred scriptures, the holy oracles, and the like, that he may confirm his own opinions by them. Thus, in his treatise concerning the change and alteration of names, ‘ Who, as Job saith, is free from defilement, ‘ though life be one day? For there are innumerable ‘ things which pollute the soul, &c.’ So indeed, Job’s words run very much in the Greek version, according to the Alexandrian MS. for they are, chap. xiv. 4. ‘ Who is pure from defilement? Not one, though ‘ even life be of one day.’ Instead of which, we have in our translation, ‘ Who can bring a clean thing ‘ out of an unclean? Not one.’ Upon the whole

‘ yet we insist, that all such of their writings which we have collected, ‘ bear the sacred stamp of divinity. Never was such a contradiction ‘ heard of!’ See his Philos. Dictionary, Article Solomon, p. 331.

* Philo, De mutatione nominum, page 1051. Paris Edition 1640. *Τις γαρ, ὡς ὁ Ἰωβ φησι, καθαρὸς ἀπο βύτῃ, καὶ μία ἡμέρα ἐστὶν ἡ ζῶν; &c. In Alex. MS. Τις γαρ ἐστὶ καθαρὸς ἀπο βύτῃ; ὅδε εἷς, ἐστὶ καὶ μίας ἡμέρας γιγνέται ὁ βίος.*

then, Voltaire had no good cause to say, that Josephus did not include the book of Job among the writings of the Hebrew canon.

S E C T I O N VII.

Of his concluding, in chapter forty-ninth, that the Jews did not call Jacob, Israel, nor themselves Israelites, till they were slaves in Chaldaea, from a passage of Philo.—And of his saying, That Josephus owns the practice of circumcision was learned from the Egyptians, agreeably to the testimony of Herodotus.—That he ascribes their being unknown by the Greeks, to their omission to cultivate letters.—That he makes the translators of the law into Greek, tell some stories to Philadelphus, which he does not.—And of his wrong inference from these stories.

I ONLY further accuse him of injuries to Josephus in another chapter of this treatise. It is in the forty-ninth, where he discusses this question, ‘Whether the Jews were instructed by other nations, or other nations by the Jews.’ Here I find him guilty of such a number of misrepresentations, as perhaps can scarce be paralleled in so few sentences.

As it is my professed intention to shew that Mr. Voltaire gives false accounts of Josephus, I might omit animadverting upon his first paragraph; where, from Philo’s telling us, ‘That Israel is a Chaldaean word, that it was a name the Chaldaeans gave to the just who were consecrated to God; that Israel signified, *seeing God*,’ he concludes, ‘That this a-

alone seems to prove, that the Jews did not call Jacob, Israel; that they did not take upon themselves the name of Israelites, till such time as they had some knowledge of this Chaldaean tongue, which could not be but when they were slaves in Chaldaea.* And the rather that here indeed I cannot blame him for wrong quotation. Nevertheless I cannot forbear observing, that there is in it very false reasoning. For Moses represents, not the Hebrews, as Mr. Voltaire supposes, but God himself, whose knowledge of all languages will not be disputed, to have bestowed the name of Israel upon their great progenitor, which again gave rise to the nation's being called Israelites. He also makes God to have subjoined * at the same time, a very different interpretation of it from that by this dreaming allegorist, and an interpretation which hath its foundation in an Hebrew etymology. Nay Philo himself, in his treatise concerning drunkenness, sets forth God altering Jacob's name into Israel, and produces the ve-

* Thus Moses acquaints us, that the person who wrestled with Jacob in human form, said unto him, 'Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.' Gen. xxxii. 28. Wherefore Israel must be derived from the Hebrew words, *יָרַב* *dominari, principem esse, et אֱלֹהִים Deus*. How strange is it then that Philo's explication of it should have been adopted by so many fathers in the Christian church, as Origen, Eusebius, Didymus of Alexandria, and even Jerome in one place! though indeed he argues against it in another, at considerable length, as violent and unnatural; it being necessary for defence of it to suppose that it is an abridgment of three Hebrew words, with the alteration of some of their letters, and the suppression of others. Compare his Treatise de Nominibus Hebraicis, Bened. edit. tom. 2. p. 536, and his Commentary upon the passage in Genesis,

ry words of Scripture, quoted below, concerning the cause of that change, according to which it must have happened many hundred years before the captivity by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans; tho' there likewise he proposes his own idle fancies about its signification. 'When God was about (says he) 'to make him see those things which he had before 'heard, for the sight is more faithful than the ears, 'the oracle sounded, His name shall not be called 'Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name, because thou 'hast prevailed powerfully with God and with man. 'Jacob then is a name of learning and proficiency, 'depending upon the powers of hearing, but Israel 'of perfection, for the name denotes the sight of 'God.' And agreeably he introduces Moses calling his people in his time, by the name of the children of Israel: * 'For it is rightly said, the children of Israel groaned on account of their labours.' Since then God was the author of the name of Israel, both according to Moses and Philo, were the unacquaintedness of the Hebrews, who however had their original from Ur of the Chaldees, as great as Mr. Voltaire supposes, till they were carried into that country by their enemies, his inference from the passage of Philo, in the beginning of his History of his Mis-

ibid. p. 215. The same gloss is also to be found in the Apostolic Constitutions, lib. 7. cap. 37. and lib. 8. cap. 15. But when Daille brings this as an evidence, that these Constitutions were a later production than the third century, as he does in his *Book de Pseudepigraphis Apostolicis*, lib. 1. p. 188. edit. Harderovici, 1683; saying, Their authors must have borrowed it from the fathers in that age of the church, he must certainly have forgot that Philo taught the explanation long before.

* See Philo, p. 333. and compare *Exod. ii. 23, 24.*

sion to Caligula, must fall to the ground. I give now a literal translation of it, that every reader may judge how far it will bear his superstructure upon it: 'That sort of men,' (he is speaking of the supplicant or devotional kind, *το ἱκετικὸν γένος*) 'is called indeed in the Chaldaean tongue, Israel; but, the name being interpreted into the Greek language, seeing God.'

But let us now consider his gross misrepresentations of Josephus here, which must be still more inexcusable than his false reasoning. 'Flavian Josephus, says he, in his reply to Appion, Lysimachus, and Molon, plainly acknowledges, that the Egyptians taught other nations circumcision, as Herodotus testifies.' But does Josephus confess, that the practice of circumcision was learned by the Jews from the Egyptians, which is evidently Voltaire's meaning, since otherwise he acknowledges nothing to his purpose? I think he does it not, either in express terms, or by just deduction. Let us examine the passage. To confute Appion's charge, that the Jews were an upstart race, he observes, * 'Neither was Herodotus the Halicarnassian, ignorant of our nation, but appears to have mentioned it after some fashion; for writing about the Colchians in his second book, he says, "The Colchians, and Egyptians, and Ethiopians, do alone of all men practise circumcision from the beginning: for the Phoenicians and Syrians in Palestine, confess they learned it from the Egyptians; but the Syrians about Thermanon, and the river Parthenius, and their neighbours the Macrones, say they learned it lately from the Colchians: and these are they who only of all

* See Book I. against Appion, Sect. 22. Hudson's edit.

“ men are circumcised; and they seem to do so in
“ the same manner with the Egyptians. But I can-
“ not tell as to the Egyptians or Ethiopians, which
“ of them learned it from one another.” Thus far
Josephus quotes Herodotus, then follows his own re-
flection. ‘ He (meaning Herodotus) ‘ hath said there-
‘ fore, that the Syrians in Palestine are circumcised;
‘ but the Jews only, of them that inhabit Palestine,
‘ are circumcised: he therefore hath mentioned this,
‘ knowing about them.’ Now is there here any plain
acknowledgment by Josephus, that the Jews learned
circumcision from the Egyptians? Herodotus indeed,
according to him, relates that they confessed it; but
he himself does not in terms own the truth of that
account. Nor can it be argued from his silence, that
he thought it just: for that he makes no objection
to Herodotus’s assertion, that they confessed they de-
rived the custom from the Egyptians, can never be
a proof that he believed it had its rise from them,
when he only produced the passage against Appion,
who had not reproached the Jews with having bor-
rowed that ceremony from the Egyptians, but mere-
ly denied that the Greeks had any knowledge of them.
Every one must perceive, it was enough against his
adversary, to shew that Herodotus had mentioned a
practice prevalent among the Jewish nation; nor had
he any business to discuss whether he gave a right
or wrong account of its introduction, as there was
no controversy between them upon that point. There
are even strong reasons against putting such a con-
struction upon Josephus’s omitting to contradict He-
rodotus about the original of circumcision among
the Jews; because he cannot be supposed, without

great inconsistency, to approve every thing in this passage of the Greek historian, although he hath not found fault with him. For how could Josephus believe with Herodotus, that the people he enumerates, were alone of all men circumcised, when he tells us, * ‘ That the Arabians circumcise their children,’ who are a different nation from any in his catalogue of them that practised that rite? Nay, how could he believe the very thing which Voltaire makes him to confess, That circumcision prevailed among the Egyptians before it obtained among the Jews, when he tells us, ‘ That God gave unto Abraham the command of circumcision, because he was willing his posterity should continue separate, and distinguished from others †.’ Surely he who says this, shews his opinion that it was, at the time of its institution, peculiar to them, and unobserved by the rest of the world.

We will now try the author upon another point, whether his representations of Josephus are agreeable to truth. Says he, ‘ The same Josephus acknowledges, that his nation, whose credit he endeavours nevertheless to enhance, had for a long time no commerce with other nations; that it was in particular unknown to the Greeks, who however were at the same time acquainted with the Tartars and Scythians. Nor is it surprising,’ says he, meaning Josephus, ‘ that a people so far removed from the sea, and neglecting the cultivation of letters, should be so little known.’

* Antiq. i. xii. 2.

† Josephus's words are, Antiq. i. 10. 5. Προσεταιξει δε (ὁ Θεός) βελομερος το απ' αυτε γειος μετρη τοις αλλοις μη συμφυρομενοι, περιμενεσθαι τα αιδεια,

But where does Josephus give this account? I might insist he does * not mention the Tartars at all, as a nation known to the Greeks, for he speaks of the Scythians and Thracians; but the Thracians will not be allowed by any, who are skilled in geography, to have possessed the same tract of land with the Tartars: They are rather thought to have been settled about Constantinople, and through that country where the Turks now live, as indeed Josephus mentions their being known to the Greeks, on account of their neighbourhood, which suits that opinion very well. But to pass this, Josephus does indeed attribute their ignorance of his nation to these things, ‘ To
 ‘ their want of a country upon the sea-coast, and to
 ‘ their neglect of trade, which things were chief
 ‘ causes of intercourse with strangers; for their towns
 ‘ were distant from the sea, and they were employ-
 ‘ ed in cultivating their good land. Above all, they
 ‘ were intent upon educating their children, and
 ‘ observing their laws, and the religion delivered ac-
 ‘ cording to them, which they reckoned the most
 ‘ necessary work of their whole lives.’ He imputes it further, ‘ To their peculiarity of diet, and to their
 ‘ fathers not being addicted to war, through desire
 ‘ of more extensive territory, though their country
 ‘ abounded with many thousands of brave men:’ and he shews that other nations were also long unknown to them, for like reasons, as the Romans and Spaniards, &c. But he does not say that their ignorance of the Jews, proceeded from this people’s omission to cultivate letters, as Voltaire alledges. So far is he from assigning this reason, that he contends the Py-

* See Josephus’s first book against Appion, p. 12.

thagoreans* had taken some of their lessons from them, and that divers states had imitated their customs.

He goes on: ‘ When the same historian relates
 ‘ with his usual exaggerations, the manner equally
 ‘ honourable as incredible, in which the king Pto-
 ‘ lomy Philadelphus purchased a Greek translation
 ‘ of the Jewish books, done by Hebrew writers in
 ‘ the city of Alexandria; Josephus, I say, adds
 ‘ that Demetrius of Phalereus, who ordered this
 ‘ translation for his king’s library, asked one of the
 ‘ translators how it happened, that no historian, no
 ‘ foreign poet, had ever spoke of the Jewish books?’
 The translator replied, ‘ As these laws are all divine,
 ‘ no one has dared to undertake speaking of them,
 ‘ and those who have thought proper to do it, have
 ‘ been chastised by heaven.’ Now here again are
 two mistakes; for whereas Mr. Voltaire makes De-
 metrius ask the translators, Josephus represents the
 king to have done it: and whereas he makes one
 of the translators reply, Josephus tells us that De-
 metrius answered him. His words are, ‘ Philadel-
 ‘ phus rejoiced, seeing his scheme usefully finished;
 ‘ but especially he was pleased with the laws read to
 ‘ him, and was astonished at the wisdom and under-
 ‘ standing of the lawgiver; wherefore he began to
 ‘ hold a conversation with Demetrius, how, the le-
 ‘ gislation being thus admirable, none of the histori-
 ‘ ans or poets had mentioned it. But Demetrius re-
 ‘ plied, that none dared to touch the writing of these
 ‘ laws, because it was divine and venerable, and be-
 ‘ cause some were hurt by God who attempted it.†’

* See the same book, Sect. 22. † See Antiq. 12. 2. 13.

Voltaire after this, cites the stories about Theopompus and Theodectes, as related also by the same translator, for he continues them all as a part of his reply to Demetrius, ere he shut up the period which he had begun, with the requisite mark, ‘ Theopompus being inclined to insert some part of it (the Jewish law) in his history, lost his senses for thirty years; but being acquainted in a dream, that he had become an idiot for wanting to penetrate into divine things, and to acquaint the prophane therewith; he appeased the wrath of God by prayer, and recovered his senses. Theodectes, a Grecian poet, having introduced some passages, which he had taken from our holy books, in a tragedy, became blind; and did not recover his sight, till after he had acknowledged his fault:’ But neither were these stories, which to many seem incredible, told by one of the translators of the law unto Greek, or indeed by any Jew, according to Josephus, but by Demetrius himself; so that he must answer for them, as well as for the account to the king, of the cause why the historians and poets were silent about the legislation of the Jews, with which he introduced them.

So much for the misrepresentations of Josephus in this chapter. Yet it may be proper to subjoin, in consequence of the detection of falshood here made, that the censure with which he finishes it is ill placed, ‘ These two stories of Josephus,’ says he, ‘ which are unworthy of a place in history, or of being related by a man that has common sense, are in fact contradictory to the praises he bestows upon this Greek translation of the Jewish books; for if it was a crime to insert any part of them in another lan-

‘guage, it was a far greater crime doubtless to enable all the Greeks to understand them. Josephus in relating these tales, at least agrees that the Greeks never had any knowledge of the writings of his nation.’ But how does this follow? The stories are Demetrius’s, not Josephus’s, for they are only mentioned as a part of his reply to the Egyptian monarch, without any affirmation of their truth. And was it inconsistent with such recital of them, to commend the translation of their sacred books into the Greek language? Surely not. He might even, I think, have believed them himself, and averred their reality to the world, and have praised that work, without incurring any just blame for self-contradiction. For the instances of divine vengeance were upon them, who mixed and blended passages from their sacred books, with prophane fables or relations, placing them on a level. Here, their holy volumes were exhibited pure and unalloyed. Still plainer it is, that in perfect consistency with his insertion of these stories of Demetrius, in so indifferent a manner, he might suppose the Greeks to have had knowledge of their affairs, either by conversation with Jews, or by a version of their scriptures in whole or in part, into a language which they understood. But our design was not to defend the truth of Josephus’s narrative, but only to convict Voltaire of † gross mis-

† These remarks, upon this forty-ninth chapter of the Philosophy of History, were all, except the last, published in the Museum, so long ago as December 1765. Nor had I then any intention of taking any more notice of Mr. Voltaire, for I concluded them thus, ‘I leave it to every unprejudiced person to judge, whether any confidence can be reposed in such an author’s account of facts. It cannot be thought,

representations of his meaning upon different occasions, in his Philosophy of History, which I hope is sufficiently done.

Upon the whole, from these numerous detections of Mr. Voltaire's falshood, with respect to Josephus, to which more might have been added, must not his admirers be rendered more distrustful of his details from antient writers in general, and more cautious of giving their assent to them as genuine, without examination? or if they suppose him more honest and faithful in his recitals from heathen authors, must they not acknowledge him to have been so carried away by prejudice and partiality, to violate the rules of truth in his accounts of the Jewish historian, as will leave an indelible and perpetual reproach upon his character for dissingenuity, and upon themselves for rashness and credulity, if they shall hereafter rely upon them, as just representations of his sense?

' that his violations of the great rule of truth, are pecoliar to this Chapter. May these remarks through the channel of your Magazine, put the public on their guard against being misled by him, till some person of greater leisure and ability, more fully expose him !' Nor did I form the scheme of the present detection, till a considerable time after, upon reading repeated wishes, that some person would animadvert upon the abuse with which he had treated religion ; and upon seeing that his works were printed with eagerness.——If any reader observe any difference between the quotations of Voltaire's words in the Museum for Dec. 1765, and here, the plain account of it is, that the remarks were then drawn up, on reading the translation of that chapter by the Monthly Reviewers for July of that year, I hope in an honest indignation, at seeing so many misrepresentations in so few sentences ; whereas they are now accommodated to the English translation of the whole treatise.

P A R T II.
O F
M R. V O L T A I R E ' S
M I S R E P R E S E N T A T I O N S
O F T H E
S A C R E D B O O K S.

HAD this author been satisfied with scoffing at such passages of Scripture as seem offensive in themselves *, or appear inconsistent with others, while at the same time he religiously governed himself by the dictates of truth in their exhibition, and recited them as they stood, without aggravating difficulties; nay, had he even given us a false account of some unimportant facts, and of some trivial circumstances in more material and weighty transactions only, which might have been imputed to forgetfulness and inadvertence, there would have been less cause of complaint against him; but when

* That there are passages of this kind in Scripture, especially in the Old Testament, cannot be denied: but it does not therefore follow, it is not of divine authority. There are, notwithstanding, solid proofs of this, even as there are sufficient demonstrations, that the course and constitution of nature proceeds from God, though some parts of it appear to us liable to objections. And indeed, why should it be expected or required, that a book, which challenges a divine original, should be clear of things which create exception, more than

he throws out many invidious reflections, without all support from the Bible, often advances propositions as contained in it, which are repugnant to the most express letter thereof, yea repeats the same notorious falsehoods, on different occasions, as unquestionable truths, misinterprets texts which he cites to prove his calumnies in a most unjustifiable manner, perverting and wresting words to a sense which they were never intended to convey, and scarce ever ima-

the mundane system? since, by this very circumstance, while there is no want of arguments that it has such a source, it hath a greater fitness to be a touch-stone of mens characters, or a trial of the candour and integrity of all to whom it is proposed. Now, in consideration of the superior strength and validity of these proofs, that the Bible is the word of God, every person is bound to admit it as such, instead of being left at liberty to reject it, and perhaps also treat it with scorn and derision, in spite of their force and energy, because there is therein an intermixture of some matters that displease him. And every impartial Theist, or unprejudiced believer in natural religion, will act conformably: for he will reflect with himself, that there are also difficulties in the order and frame of the universe, which yet he holds, upon prepollent evidence for it, to be the workmanship of God, and the subject of his providence and government. And he will farther consider, that it is not to be wondered at, if some points create offence or entanglement in the Sacred Oracles, particularly in those which were committed to the custody of the Jewish church, when their great antiquity, and the form and language in which they are written, are recollected.—The history of many requirements and actions in them, is very concise and summary, unaccompanied with an explication of the grounds on which they were founded.—The customs, both public and private, in ages so remote, and countries so distant, as these which are there treated of, were widely different from the usages of our time and place, which yet there is an unreasonable disposition to make the standard in estimating the propriety and decorum of every speech or practice related in the Bible.—There may easily happen a mistake about the true meaning of some vocables or phrases that occur, the

gined to bear ; In short, employs the basest arts, that he may make the Scripture furnish more abundant matter for ridicule, and more plentiful occasion of unbelief, what censure can be too severe for him with all honest and unprejudiced persons ? So criminal and inexcusable however, I trust, his conduct will appear to be. In exposing him for this unfair treatment of the Sacred Books, and vindicating them from his

more that the Hebrew hath long ceased to be a living tongue, and that the volume which alone is extant in it, is of no large size ; wherefore there is less room for the discovery of their genuine signification, by comparing their use in different passages : as indeed not a few terms or idioms of expression are met with only once.—Nor is it impossible, according to the opinion of many persons of sound judgment and real piety, that errors may have been permitted to creep into the text here and there, through the carelessness or unskilfulness of transcribers, in a long succession of centuries, about affairs slight in their nature, and unessential to the great end for which the Scripture was penned ; I mean, the length of a person's life or reign, the number of an army, the multitude of the killed or prisoners in a battle, the quantity of spoil seized, the sum of treasure accumulated or expended, and the like. For these, and other causes of a similar nature, he will not, I say, think it strange that some points disgust or perplex ; but still will think himself obliged, from a regard to the many excellent rules of virtue and happiness, which the Bible contains, and to the other reasons which evince its divine authority, to make light of the objections arising thence, which is no more than making the same allowances for shortness of detail, for diversity of manners in a long interval of ages, for obscurity and intricacy of stile, and for vitiations or corruptions in copying, which are thought equitable every day to the writings of Heathens, through which there runs a vein of good sense, that they may be freed from the charge of absurdity, and the imputation of self-contradiction. And thus will he be enabled to stand fast in his veneration for the Scripture, against the attacks of infidels, their most boasted cavils on these pretences proving impotent efforts to overthrow, or even shake, his belief of it.

abuse, I will first consider these instances of misrepresentation of their sense, for which he may plead the authority of the Vulgate version; and thereafter these far more numerous instances of the same, for which he cannot pretend the authority of this, or any other translation; at least, if he may alledge this in two or three cases, cannot justify the meaning he adopts as agreeable to the original.

CHAPTER I.

Of his Misrepresentations of Scripture, for which he may plead the authority of the Vulgate version.

TO the Vulgate version of the Bible, this writer hath paid a peculiar deference. From it, in his recital of the affairs of the Jewish nation, are derived many names of persons; which, at first sight, amaze and confound an English reader, familiar as the account of them in the Old Testament may be to him: for in that version, as in our author, we meet with Phaceiah for Pekahiah, Romeli for Remaliah, Ofes for Hosea, Aod for Ehud, &c.—Further, upon a false sense given in the same, or a wrong inference from its mode of expressing the import of the original, his scoffs and cavils at the Sacred History, and his censures and reproaches of the people of Israel, who are the great subjects of it, are sometimes wholly founded. Of this I mention these examples. Let the reader judge whether the charge is not just.

SECTION I.

Of his saying in chapter thirty-fourth of the Philosophy of History, that the second temple is represented in the book of Esdras, to have had only three rows of rough stone.

SAYS Mr. Voltaire, in his Philosophy of History, chap. * thirty-fourth, ‘ We learn in the book of Esdras, that the walls of the second temple had only three rows of rough stone, and that the rest was of wood only. It was rather a barn than a temple.’

Nbw such indeed was the order about building it in Cyrus’s decree, according to the copy thereof, which was recovered upon search through the repositories at the royal palace, in the province of the Medes, as the Vulgate version relates it, Ezra, vi. 4. ‘ That there be three rows of unpolished stones.’ And such also was the execution of the work by the Jews, according to the information, which it makes to have been sent to the Persian monarch Darius by Tatnai, and other enemies, when they solicited him to stop the progress of it, Ezra, v. 8. ‘ Be it known to the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which is built with unpolished stone.’ But, mean as the second temple was in comparison of Solomon’s, has the Vulgate version reason on its side here? By no means; In this representation, it differs from all interpreters. For the Septuagint have in the latter passage, choice† stones, and in the former, strong, that

* Page 162.

† Εκλεκτοίς, κραταιοίς.

is, ponderous and massive stones. Bochart † turns the term, marble stones, adding that Jarchi, Kimchi, Aruch, Elias, and other Jewish Doctors, after the Talmudists, put the same meaning on the original.

The Syriac translation again, with the translations of Junius and Tremellius, of the Zurich divines, of Castalio, of Piscator, and of Munster, make it, very large or heavy stones, as ours hath, great stones; while * Josephus, who does not transcribe the letter of the adversaries of his nation into his Antiquities, but only the imperial edict, calls them, well polished or well smoothed stones, and the author of the apocryphal book of † Ezra says, ‘The wall was of hewed stones, of great cost or expence.’ The truth is, the Chaldee vocable here leads us to think of stones so vast in size, and enormous in magnitude, that it behoved to roll rather than carry them, conformably to the acceptation of the same word in the Hebrew tongue. At the same time, if we have regard to the use of the root *ghelal*, which answers it in the Arabic language, we may suppose it denotes stones, excellent for their nature and kind, and not merely for their bulk or quantity, by consequence, stones of high price and value. Estius therefore, a Romish divine, as much interested as he was, for the honour of his church, to maintain the Vulgate version, renounces it

† Hierozoicon, par. 2. lib. 6. cap. 16.

* Antiq. 11. 4. 6. Ευξισων.

† Cap. 6. 9. Δια λιθων ξυσων πολυτελων.

§ To this purpose the learned Michaelis explains it in his notes; while it is remarked in the margent of our Bibles, that the Chaldee  *galelim*, denotes stones of rolling.

here, and observes upon Ezra, v. 8. ‘ That || the word ‘ in the original does not signify, unpolished, but ‘ great either in dimension, or in cost.’ And Houbigant, § a priest of the same communion, hesitates not to render it, huge stones. So much is Voltaire’s ridicule here, of this temple’s being more like a barn from its rough stones, built upon the singularity of the Vulgate version, and a singularity without any good foundation; perhaps even owing to the mistake of a transcriber.

S E C T I O N II.

Of his representing in chapter fortieth of the same, and in other pieces, that Moses commanded the Levites to kill twenty-three thousand, on occasion of the golden calf.

IN chapter fortieth, however, he hath committed a still worse fault. For he represents Moses to command the Levites, ‘ to * massacre indiscriminately ‘ their brothers, to the number of twenty-three thousand, to screen his own brother, who ought rather ‘ to have died, than made a golden calf to be adored, ‘ And, strange to relate, his brother is after this ‘ shameful action created high-pontiff, and thirty ‘ three thousand men are massacred.’ And afterwards,

|| Vid. Pol. Synopf. in loc.

§ Vid. Houbigant in loc. who at the same time expresses his astonishment, that Le Clerc should make it, square stones, forasmuch as the verb which conveys the idea of turning over, would rather suggest a round, than any angular or cornered form.

♥ Phil. of History, page 186, 187.

in the† next chapter, when he gives a summary of the Jews exterminated by their own brothers, or by the order of God himself, he says, ‘ The Levites after the adoration of the golden calf, cast in a mould by Moses’s brother, massacred twenty-three thousand Jews.’ In his Philosophical Dictionary also, he introduces learned men making an objection to those, who hold Moses to have been the author of the Pentateuch, from this‡ story, ‘ These murmuring Jews might have said to Moses—Instead of punishing your worthless brother for the golden calf, and setting it up for us to worship it, you make him our high-priest, and order your Levites to slay * twenty-three thousand of your people; Would our fathers have tamely suffered this?’

But what reason has he for affirming, that twenty-three thousand were slain? For as to his making them thirty-three thousand in one clause of the passage first quoted, I suppose this to be an accidental error of the pen or press, as it swells the number ten thousand beyond what it stands in his own account

† Page 194.

‡ Page 293, Article, Moses.

* The same account he gives of their number too in his *Treatise of Toleration*, chap. 12. page 153. where he says, ‘ Many deceived by the goodness and humanity of their heart, cannot believe that Moses slaughtered three and twenty thousand souls, to expiate this crime,’ viz. of worshipping the calf. And what a pity Mr. Voltaire, by this, and many other instances of affectation to misrepresent and ridicule the sacred books, particularly those of the Old Testament, should have disparaged this work, which otherwise might have procured him lasting honour, as a noble dissuasive from religious persecution! How hath he, by these sallies of profane wit, filled a great number with prejudices against the principle of forbearance he aims to inculcate, who but for them might have become proselytes to it!

of the order there, and of the execution in other places. There is truly no ground for calling them twenty-three thousand at all, but the Vulgate translation. For the Hebrew text represents only three thousand to have been killed, *Exod. xxxii. 17.* ‘*Moses said unto the sons of Levi, thus sayeth the Lord God of Israel, put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate through the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour; and the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.*’ And in this number of the slain, whom Le Clerc, and other commentators reckon to have been the advisers and leaders in that defection from the pure worship of Jehovah, by setting up the calf as his symbol, the Samaritan copy, Chaldee, Greek, Syriac, Arabic, and all versions, do agree, except the Vulgate, or such as may have transcribed it. Philo moreover, who was contemporary with our Saviour and his apostles, makes three thousand only to have lost their lives upon that offence; ‘*The Levites, says * he, receiving the charge most readily, because they were displeased almost from the moment they knew the transgression was committed, kill in a hasty (or brisk and youthful) manner three thousand of them, who were a little before most beloved by them.*’ As to Josephus, he makes no mention of the extent of the havock at all, having omitted the idolatry which gave rise to it, like some other instances of base and dishonourable behaviour, in the

* *Vid. De Vita Moſis, lib. 3. pag. 679. Par. Edit. 1640.—ακαταρυστοι ἦσαν εἰς τρισχιλίους τῶν προ μικροφιλτατῶν.*

progenitors of his people, so that we can receive no light from him at all here. Moreover, which is very worthy of attention, even the manuscript copies of the Vulgate version itself do not accord about the number of them who perished on the occasion, if we may credit those who have had access to their inspection. For they† inform us, that some of them read, twenty-three thousand, and some, thirty-three thousand; wherefore many eminent divines of the church of Rome, disregard its account thereof altogether, looking upon it as corrupted here, among whom are Arias Montanus, Cajetan, and Vatablus. Nay, in the Complutenian and Paris Polyglotts, which were printed under the direction of the learned in its communion, the Latin text itself exhibits three thousand, as the total amount of those that were destroyed, either from a reverence of the original, supported as the genuineness of its reading is, in the manner already mentioned, or from a preference of the authority of some manuscript of the Vulgate which did read so, but is now lost or unknown. This Bochart‡ observes, who also conjectures, that the old Italic version which Jerome reformed, read three thousand, because Ambrose of Milan, who

† Pol. Synopsis Criticorum, in locum.

‡ Hieroz. p. 1. lib. 2. cap. 34. But his opinion about the reading of the Italic version appears very uncertain, since Ambrose might borrow his account from the Septuagint, as it is plain he understood Greek, from his appeal to the Greek copies of the New Testament, against some who pretended that the Latin ones were falsified and vitiated, which the excellent Dr. Lardner hath remarked, Credib. part 2. vol. 9 page 255. And any other Latin writers, whom Bochart quotes for a like reading of the text, lived after Gregory the Great, who read twenty-three thousand.

flourished about the year of Christ 370, in his letter to Regulus, calls the slain for the calf no more, Upon the whole, Voltaire hath no authority for thus swelling the number of the persons that were killed by the Levites, in obedience to Moses's order, but the Vulgate version, in opposition to the Hebrew and Samaritan texts, and * all antient translators, although that is likewise various in its readings here, instead of uniform and consistent, and therefore abandoned by Popish writers themselves, of the greatest name and reputation. And is not this very disingenuous dealing, to cavil at the sacred books upon the credit of this one version, which is modern in comparison of some others, differs in its own representation of the fact in the manuscript copies which are extant of it, and is so undeniably confuted by every critical argument which can have place here? Whether the number of twenty-three thousand was first introduced into this translation by an accidental mistake of some transcriber, or whether it was first

* It may be proper to take notice here, that the authors of the Antient Universal History, 8vo. vol. 3. page 414. say in a note, 'Some copies of the Vulgate and Seventy read twenty thousand, and others thirty-three thousand.' while at the same time they justify the number three thousand, by this among other reasons, that it is hardly probable the Levites could make a greater slaughter in so short a time, viz. before Moses, by his intercession obtained the pardon of the guilty. But as there is a typographical mistake in the number twenty thousand here, which accordingly is in the folio edition twenty three thousand, so I suppose it must be admitted an error in them altogether, to mention the Seventy as reading either of the ways. At least, Bos has marked no different reading in the Greek copies from the received one *τρισχιλις* three thousand, except *τρεις χιλιαδας*, which hath the same meaning with that other expression.

foisted in with intention, by some warm zealot, as certain critics have ingeniously conjectured, that he might make the number of the slain here, quadrate with the Apostle's number, 1 Cor. x. 5. I do not now inquire, it being foreign to the work before me. He however, I think, is speaking of the mischievous effects of God's wrath against Israel, not for making and worshipping the golden calf, but for committing whoredom with the Moabitish women; for with the account of the same by Moses, he may, without any violence, be in different ways reconciled.

S E C T I O N III.

Of his making, in chapter forty-third, God direct Ezekiel to cover his bread with human excrement, and thereafter with the excrement of oxen.

ANOTHER instance of misrepresentation, in which Mr. Voltaire hath, at least seemeth to have, the authority of the Vulgate, occurs in the forty-third chapter of his *Philosophy of History*. Speaking of Ezekiel, he says, † 'He is to eat bread made of wheat, ' barley, beans, lentiles, millet, and to cover it with ' human excrements. Thus, said he, will the children of Israel eat their bread besmeared with those ' nations among whom they shall be driven. But after having eat this bread of sorrow, God allows him ' to cover it with only the excrement of oxen.' And he dwells on this again in his *Philosophical Dictionary*; so delightful is the subject to him, and so confident is he of the truth of his account! † 'Several

† Page 209.

‡ Page 163. article Ezekiel.

‘ critics cannot be reconciled to the order given him
 ‘ by the Lord, that during 390 days he should eat
 ‘ barley, wheat, and millet bread besmeared with
 ‘ man’s dung. Then said the prophet, “ Ah Lord
 “ God, behold my soul hath not hitherto been pol-
 “ luted.” And the Lord answered, “ Well, instead
 “ of man’s excrements, I allow thee cow dung, and
 “ thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.” As it is
 ‘ not customary with us to eat bread with such mar-
 ‘ malade, these orders to the generality of men ap-
 ‘ pear unworthy of the divine majesty.’

That Ezekiel should be commanded to mix much of the coarser and meaner kinds of grain, with a little of the finer and richer sort, by which means the stock would continue longer unexhausted, to signify the scarcity which the inhabitants of Jerusalem should labour under, and the unpalatable fare they should be reduced to submit to, during the siege, we wonder not. But we are shocked at his being bid cover his bread with human excrements, to represent that the children of Israel should eat their bread besmeared with those nations among whom they should in their captivity reside; and at his being only indulged, upon his importunity against the use hereof, with the excrements of oxen or cows in their room, after he had ate so abominable and loathsome food, which is Mr. Voltaire’s tale, at least in one place.

Is this, however, the necessary or reasonable import of the divine direction at first, and allowance afterward, to the prophet, that he should feed upon bread having either such an ingredient in its composition, or (for the reader must pardon the offen-

fiveness of the idea as Voltaire's) such marmalade spread over it? Not at all. The Vulgate * indeed favours it: and it is, perhaps, the most obvious sense even of our English version, † that ordure should be wrought into the mass or dough from which the cakes were to be made: but the original may, nay ought to be interpreted, only to denote, that excrements should be used for fuel, in baking his bread, instead of coals, wood, turf, or like things. For as *גנ* *gnug* signifies not to cover, but to bake, whence its derivatives are always rendered, cakes, so it is certain the prefix *ב* *beth* in *בגלגל* *begaleli*, may be turned *upon*, as it is with frequency ‡; in which way the command of God will run, v. 12. 'And as to it, (the cake) thou shalt bake it upon human excrements;' the same being dried, shall be employed to make a fire, over which thou shalt harden thy bread. And this again will agree to verse 15, where the word *גל* *gnal* occurs, which signifies most commonly *upon*, || and is so rendered by our translators themselves, where there is mention of the fuel

* Vulg. vers. Ezek. iv. 12. 'Et stercore operies illud.—v. 15,

† Et facies panem tuum in eo.'

‡ It stands thus, iv. 12. 'Thou shalt bake the bread with dung that cometh out of man in their sight.—v. 15. 'Lo I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.'

§ In this way it is turned in Gen. xxxvii. 34. 'He put sackcloth upon his loins.' Levit. xx. 9. 'His blood shall be upon him.' Neh. ii. 12. 'The beast upon which I rode.' Psal. cxix. 135. 'Make thy face to shine upon thy servant.'

|| See Gen. xix. 23. xlvii. 31. Levit. xvi. 21. Num. iv. 11. ix. 15. Judg. vii. 6. 2 Sam. iv. 7. 2 Kings, iv. 34. Ps. xxix. 3.

applied to prepare bread in a § construction exactly similar to that in the passage before us. Or if this does not please, the same prefix ב *beth*, may be translated *with*, in the sense which *with* often bears when it denotes an instrument of action, or mean of operation, as in these forms, he wrote with a pen, he killed with a sword, and the like. So to bake bread with excrements, is only to do it making and feeding a fire with the same to dry the cake, and fit it for use at the table: suitably to which we not only read, ye shall roast the passover *with* fire, 2 Chron. xxxv. 13. but that Elifha took a yoke of oxen, and flew them, and boiled their flesh *with* the instruments of the oxen, 1 Kings, xix. 21. † where no one ever understood the meaning to be, though the *with* there is the translation of the same prefix as here, that he boiled the utensils of husbandry with which he had been plowing, as well as the oxen, but that he employed them as fuel for dressing the victuals which he gave unto the people*. And indeed if the bread had been either to be formed of, or spread with excrements, it seems Ezekiel would have remonstrated

§ In Isaiah, xlv. 19. where the words of the original are, ו אף I אפית על גחליו לחם *Ve aph aphithi ghal gebalav lehem*. Yea 'also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof,' viz. of the ash-tree. As here they are, ו עשית את לחמך על־הה *Ve gnafitha eth-lahmecha gnalebab*.

† The Hebrew in that place is, ו ב כלי הבקר בשלם *U be abeli habbakar bishlam*, as here it is, ו חמא בגללי צאת האדם *Vehi begeleli tzeeth-baadam tegnugenab*; literally, 'Et quod ad ipsam placentam cum cylindris, five voluminibus excrementi humani coques ipsam.'

* According to this acceptation of *with*, though, as intimated above, it does not most readily occur to the reader, our English translation is unexceptionable.

against the injunction in stronger terms than he has done, from the antipathy and reluctance of nature to such diet, instead of pleading exemption from obedience to it, merely because he had never ate things legally unclean, what had died of itself, or been torn in pieces, as he does, v. 14. Accordingly I find very able judges have understood no more to be intended, as Michaelis, Bochart, † Le Clerc, Dr. Taylor. Nor let any be surpris'd that the prophet should speak of excrements as conveying pollution, and deprecate the use thereof even for fuel; whoever considers the charge given by God, Deut. xxiii. 12, 13, 14. will soon be sensible, that uneasiness and disquietude must have sprung up in his mind on the prescription to prepare his bread in this manner.

I conclude then, that Mr. Voltaire, after the Vulgate, hath given a false sense here. Nor is this the alone fault of which he is guilty in his professed re-

† It is observed by Michaelis, that the Chaldee and Syriac turn *β* *beth*, in the 12. verse, *upon*. 'Thou shalt prepare thy bread *upon* it:' and *himself* follows it.—Bochart, in his *Hierozyicon*, tom. 1. p. 329, says, 'Non exigit Deus a propheta ut panem comederet humano stercore co-opertum. quomodo Hieronymus videtur accepisse; tantum vult, ut panem pro carbonibus humano stercore coctum comedit, quò miseri homines quandoque pro ligno utuntur, idque symbolica de causa.—Bubulum stercus hodie in Frisia ad ligni materiam siccari testatur Erasmus in proverbio, *Boliti poenam* i. e. bubuli stercoreis.' To which I add, so did the Gallo-Graeci use cow's dung for fuel of old, according to Livy, xxxviii. 18. 'Fimo bubulo ad ignem pro lignis utuntur.' And so do the inhabitants of this country in some corners still.—Though Le Clerc turns the 12th verse, 'Eamque stercore excrementorum humanorum coques,' which is ambiguous: he renders v. 15. 'Panemque super eo parabis,' which fixes the sense to be what I have contended for.—Taylor, finally, in his *Concordance*,

cital of the transaction from the book of Ezekiel. He hath made such a representation, as is not only against the original, but against all versions without exception, that he might expose Scripture to derision with greater success: for God doth not say, according to either, ‘ Thus shall the children of Israel eat ‘ their bread besmeared with those nations among ‘ which they shall be driven,’ as he expresses it, (upon which no reader can need a commentary) but that they should eat defiled bread among them, signifying, that they should not have it in their power to observe the regulations of their law about food, for all sorts of which, the term, bread, is often put by the Hebrews, as in Gen. xix. 3. xliii. 3 1, &c. but that thro’ want and other causes, they should be constrained in Babylon, to partake of such meats as God by Moses had prohibited †.—No more is God introduced allowing him the excrements of oxen in room of human, after he had eaten bread spread over with them, as our author hath it; he indulges him to substitute the one for the other, previous to his preparation and use of any bread in conformity to his first order altogether. And after all, some think the whole was transacted in vision: wherefore, though the prophet objected to the order, as Peter did to the command, Kill, and eat, when the sheet descended in such a visionary scene, full of unclean animals, there was never any participation of food upon it by him, more than by the Apostle of these creatures that

under the word *גִּנּוּג*, citing this place, subjoins, ‘ The dung dried ‘ was to be fuel put under the gridiron to heat it.’

† See Hosea, ix. 1, 2, 3. and Daniel, i. 8.

were presented to him. How unfair then this writer here! †

SECTION IV.

Of his saying in the same chapter, that the Lord threatens by Amos, that the cows of Samaria shall be put into the caldron.

A SIMILAR instance of misrepresentation supported by the Vulgate version, we meet with, in my opinion, in this same † chapter, when he says, ‘ The Lord, in the prophecy of Amos, threatens that the cows of Samaria shall be put into the caldron, chap. vi.’

As no such expression occurs in the sixth chapter, I suppose he intended the fourth, for it begins thus, ‘ Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, (those to whom they have sold them for silver) come and let us drink ;’ The grandees of Israel being thus denominated, on account of their insolence, by which they resembled such wanton cattle, fed in the luxuriant pastures of Bashan, according to a figure used elsewhere, Ezek. xxxix. 18. Pf. xxii. 30. Then follows the word, to which their attention was by this address awakened, ‘ The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness, that lo the days shall come upon

† Yet thus also, in his Treatise on Toleration, he had set forth the matter, chap. 12. p. 181, where he says in the note, ‘ The prophet Ezekiel eats his bread covered with excrement.’

† Page 210. Philos. of History.

‘ you, that he will take you away with hooks, and
 ‘ your posterity with fish-hooks.’ In room of which
 the Vulgate hath, ‘ Levabunt vos in contis, et reli-
 ‘ quias vestras in ollis ferventibus, They will lift you
 ‘ on poles, (or perches) and your posterity in boiling
 ‘ pots,’ where every one sees the reason of his cal-
 drons.—But our translation appears far preferable.
 In other places of Scripture also, we find the inva-
 ders of a country compared to anglers or fishers, Jer.
 xvi. 16. Habak. i. 15. Then the word צַנֹּחַ *tzanoth*
 by us turned *books*, in the former clause properly
 signifies *thorns*, as in Prov. xxii. 5. Job v. 5. From
 which sense the transition was easy and natural to
 this, as the sharp extremities of thorns were used in
 fishing, in the more rude and unimproved ages of the
 world, instead of the instruments we call hooks. And
 though סִיר *sir*, is often turned, a pot or caldron, and
 סִירֹת *siroth* pots or caldrons, yet סִירִּים *sirim* is trans-
 lated *thorns* in three different places, Isa. xxxiv. 13.
 Nahum i. 10. Eccles. vii. 6. Nor can there remain
 any doubt, but it should be † so rendered here, when
 it is joined with דֹּגָה *dugah*, as the participle דֹּגִים
dugim is *fishers*, Ezek. xlvii. 10. Jerem. xvi. 16.
 God therefore threatens to draw the Israelites out
 of their towns, by their Assyrian enemies Tiglath-
 Pileser and Shalmanezar, as fish out of their watery
 element, the one removing those whom the other
 had left. And where is there in this image of their
 captivity any thing blameable or which deserves to
 be scoffed at? There was no intention † here to state

‡ I confess however the Targum hath, fisher-boats, instead of,
 thorns of fishing.

† Father Houbigant's note, who supposes the women of Samaria

a likenefs between the treatment they ſhould receive, and that of wanton cattle, by giving them the appellation of *kine of Baſhan*. Though elſewhere indeed, the oppreſſion of the people by the princes is called, flaying their ſkin and breaking their bones, and chopping them in pieces as for the pot, and as fleſh within the caldron, Micah iii. 1, 2, 3. it was only deſigned by that expreſſion, in the paſſage under conſideration, to delineate their criminal character, for which God was provoked to puniſh them, in the manner the prophet deſcribes.

S E C T I O N V.

Of his inference from certain Pſalms, that the Jews were of a ſanguinary diſpoſition; and of his miſquoting one paſſage and perverting another in their Pſalter, to prove that they were a carnal people, in Chapter forty-fourth.

I P A S S on to another inſtance. It is to be found in Chapter forty-fourth of the *Philology of Hiſtory*, which he intitles ‘Of the prayers of the Jews.’ Here, without giving them any honour on account of many pſalms in the collection, which are full of the

living in pleaſure, to be ſignified by, the *kine of Baſhan*, and the denunciation to be, that they ſhould be dealt with as fiſhes that ſport and friſk in a pond, which the fiſhers draw out with poles and hooks, and throw into their boats, is worthy to be tranſcribed here.

‘Nec mirum videri debet, talem ſimilitudinem adhiberi, poſtquam mulieres iſtae appellatae ſunt vaccae Baſan, quia hoc erat nudum cognomen, ut tauri Baſan Pſ. xxii, non autem ſimilitudo.’ Vide Houbig. Bibl. in locum.

most sublime and manly piety, and of the most exalted and pure morality, he produces a few passages, selected here and there, to shew that they were a carnal and sanguinary people, that they wished the death of a sinner rather than his conversion, and required of God all terrestrial blessings.

Now in proof of this charge about the sanguinary temper of the Jews, he quotes some of the prayers against enemies, which are scattered through the book. Nor do I accuse him of falsehood in reciting them. But are they a sufficient ground for the reflexion he throws upon that people?

In the opinion of many learned men, the passages which in our own and other * translations, are turned as requests that God would send evil upon enemies, should be rendered as predictions or declarations of David's assurance through the spirit, that God, in the course of his administration, would in-

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* Some I am aware have understood the sixth Psalm, to contain David's recital of his enemies curses against himself, rather than an account of his own imprecations against them. And to this purpose they have urged, that the wishes of hurt there are prefaced with an assertion, that the mouth of the wicked was opened against him, while he shewed them love and kindness.—That they are levelled against one person, instead of being pointed against many persons, and shut up with this observation according to the original, v. 20. 'This is the work (or behaviour) of my adversaries, with (or before) the Lord.' Finally, that there follows upon them this petition, which looks as if the curses preceding were aimed at himself, 'Let them curse, but bless thou.' Nevertheless, though this should be allowed the true interpretation, (which however is not very probable, since we cannot well suppose the Psalmist would have repeated the impious speeches of his enemies, to such number and length in a devotional office; or that the apostle Peter would have cited some clauses thence, which yet he does, to authorize

flit it upon them. For example, say they, Ps. lxxix. 22. should run thus, ' Their table shall become a ' snare before them, and that which should have been ' for their welfare, shall become a trap;' and in like manner the other exceptionable places of the same kind. But if this explication be just, in favour of which it may be observed, that for the most part the Hebrew * verbs are in the future tense, they afford no handle or pretence at all for the imputation of our author.

Left this however † please not, I add, though they should be admitted to be prayers instead of prophecies,

the filling of Judas's place in the Apostolic college, by the nomination of a successor, Acts i. 16.—20.) it would be but a small relief from the objection. For there remain many other psalms to be accounted for, where is no room for such an evasion of the difficulty; and if they can be reconciled with a moral and religious character, so may that cix. Psalm, though it should, according to the common interpretation, represent David's words against his adversaries, and not theirs against him.

* It is true, imperative forms are also intermixed. But they are less frequent, as I have said; nor is it without example, that even such receive a future signification elsewhere, as Gen. xx. 7. xlii. 18. Deut. xxxii. 50. Isai. liv. 1. &c. Is the authority of the Greek and Vulgate versions opposed to this explication? to omit, that Jews writing Greek, do sometimes employ the imperative for the future form of verbs, as in Matt. x. 13. John ii. 19. and Matt. xxiii. 32. wherefore the Seventy may be supposed to do so here, there is little weight in the argument. For who knows not, that the Greek version is in many places faulty and erroneous? yet upon it, (as will be hereafter taken notice of) the Vulgate in the Psalms was very much formed.

† It may be objected, I observe, that the version which makes these sentences prayers, instead of prophetic denunciations; is to be preferred, because the future tense is frequently used by the Hebrews in forms of intreaty, as well as the imperative, because it is unnatural to make Da-

still the author may be vindicated, from all reasonable blame and censure, for a cruel and vindictive spirit, and upon like principles, the people who gave them a place in their sacred volume.

For, first, we may suppose the penman of them so situated and circumstanced, as to justify the effusion of his heart in such language before God, against the persons whom he describes, for his own safety or the safety of the state. It is undeniably lawful, to pray for deliverance from enemies, not only by infatuation of their counsels, defeat of their enterprizes, and like methods, but even by destruction of their lives, when this is needful to our own, or our country's freedom from their oppression and unjust violence, in the same manner as it is lawful to kill them in our own, or the nation's self-defence; now it cannot be proved, that any of the prayers of the Psalmist extend beyond this unto their final damnation, whatever * air some expressions may have of such dreadful

vid in a direct address to God, enter into so long a detail of the calamities that would befall his enemies,—and in fine, because the apostles Peter, Acts, i. 16.—20. and Paul, Rom. xi. 8. 9. though they do not always cite according to the Seventy, do quote some of the clauses of Ps. lxxix. and Ps. cix. conformably to their translation, which by its use of the Greek verbs in the imperative and optative moods, exhibits them, most obviously at least, in the light of supplications from David to Jehovah, that he would so and so punish his, and the nation's enemies.

* Thus what we render Ps. lv. 15. 'Let them go down quick into hell,' is only, 'Let them go down quick or lively (while yet healthy, and free from disease) into the grave or invisible state.' Let them die suddenly, as happened to Ahitophel, 2. Sam. xvii. 23 which punishment however, he is also content should happen to himself, if their foul charges against him were not false, Ps. vii. 3.—5.

sense, according to our version. Why then might not David pray under such pressing necessity, for the excision of enemies, and the Hebrew people receive these prayers into their sacred volume, without being accused of a sanguinary disposition? Is it asked, where is the evidence that David's condition was such, that he could not be saved unless his enemies were cut off? I answer, to grant such was his apprehension or view of the matter, seems to be no greater indulgence to his character than what a very moderate degree of candour dictates. For he informs us in one place, he felt a most tender concern for the miseries of his foes, and became a most fervent intercessor with God for their welfare; Ps. xxxv. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. 'False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things which I knew not. They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into mine own bosom. I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother, &c.' And his historian has recorded some striking instances of his gentleness toward those who had given him the highest provocation; I mean, Saul, 1 Sam. xxiv. and xxvi. Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 9. Absalom, *ibid.* xviii. 5, 33. and even Nabal, whom he spared after all his rudeness and ingratitude, in compliance with Abigail's request, advanced as he was to take vengeance on him, and engaged as he was by what some men count ties of honour, in pursuance of his oath to do so, 1 Sam. xxv. Withal, it is to be attended to, that these enemies, against

whom he prays, were not only immoveably determined to accomplish the ruin of him and his friends, but were persons of the most profligate characters, hardened *against the fear of God, and destitute of all regard to truth, justice, and humanity; by consequence, they were proper objects of the divine displeasure, and of the infliction of these punishments which he solicited, in order to the protection of his oppressed and persecuted innocence, and to the support of that form of religion which God had established among the people of Israel, according to the threatnings which were contained in the law itself. David, therefore, did no more than wish, that the divine constitution should operate for his own and his country's welfare, when he poured out his soul in such requests against them. Thus his prayers for evil upon enemies, are not prayers flowing from spite and resentment on account of injuries and affronts which he had received already, and further feared from them, though the common source of like petitions in men; but were prayers directed by reasonable care of himself, and his righteous cause, together with a becoming zeal for the honour of the Deity, in the sanctions by which the observation of his ordinances was enforced among them.

Or, secondly, we may suppose the penman of these psalms, to present the prayers which he offers to God for various judgements on his wicked and impious enemies, under an impulse of the spirit, or upon a revelation of God's absolute purpose and decree to inflict them. Of this sort were Elijah's† pray-

* See Ps. x. 2.—15. xvii. 2.—14. lxviii. 1. &c.

† See Morris's Sermons. Accordingly, the expression of the A-

ers for the suspension of rain, James v. 17. and for the descent of fire from heaven, to consume the companies dispatched to arrest him, 2 Kings i. 10. Of the same kind also were Elisha's prayers for the blindness of the Syrians at Dothan, and for the destruction of the scoffers at Bethel, 2 Kings, vi. 18. ii. 24. As indeed it is absurd to suppose these extraordinary calamities would have followed on the supplications of those prophets, unless they had been agreeable to the will of God, with whatever ardor and earnestness they were presented. And why may we not add these of the Psalmist to the number? In the case of such a discovery from God to him, as I have mentioned, it became his duty to will the arrival of these punishments, against all the workings of his own pity and compassion, toward the guilty and criminal objects, as a measure which the all-wise and righteous Governor of the universe saw requisite to be pursued, for the vindication of his glory, and the support of his authority.

To one or other of these honourable sources, as seems to me, it should be admitted by all Christians at least, that these prayers are to be traced, when it is considered, that the apostle Peter, being about to produce some of these execrations and curses, as they have been called, that he might persuade the other apostles and brethren to find Judas's place vacant, and to choose a fit person in his room, to be a witness with them of Jesus's resurrection, stiles them, 'the words of the Holy Ghost;' for he intro-

postle James, which we turn, 'the effectual prayer,' is properly, the inwrought, the inspired prayer, *εμπνευμένη*; and it seems necessary to admit this translation, both for the sake of consistency in his remark, and from a regard to his scope and design in introducing the fact.

duces * them thus, ‘ This scripture must needs have
 ‘ been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth
 ‘ of David spoke before concerning Judas.—For it
 ‘ is written in the book of Psalms, ‘ Let his habita-
 “ tion be desolate, and let no man dwell therein,
 “ and his office (or charge) let another take.” Which
 is saying in effect, that the psalmist uttered these
 words not from his own private motion, but as mo-
 ved by the Holy Ghost; he therefore leaves us no
 room to suppose, that they express any irregular
 workings of human passions, though from such,
 doubtless, the hearts of good men are not all times
 wholly free, even when they are employed in devo-
 tional exercises. Nor do I see how the argument can
 be evaded, unless it be pretended, that Peter, not
 being yet infallible in his religious decisions, because
 this discourse was delivered by him, before the de-
 scent of the Spirit which Christ promised to lead him
 and his companions into all truth, was herein mis-
 taken, as in his remonstrance against our Saviour’s
 dying, Matt. xvi. 23.—But even then, there would
 be evidence for the same origin of them, from the
 declarations in the New Testament about the inspi-
 ration of the Jewish Scriptures in general, and the
 appeals by the apostles to different passages of the
 lxxix Psalm in particular, after the same manner as
 to other texts the most authoritative. See John ii.
 17. Rom. xi. 9. 10.

Now by either of these solutions, which the reader
 may think is to be preferred, David’s piety is main-
 tained, the imputation of rancour and revenge upon
 him for pronouncing such words, and of cruelty up-

* See Acts, i. 16—20. and compare Ps. lxxix. 25. cix. 8.

on the Jews for giving these compositions, wherein they occur, a place among their sacred books, is refuted; and all encouragement is also taken away from us who have not the extraordinary communications about the schemes and intentions of heaven, which he, by one hypothesis, here had, to pour out requests to God for the destruction even of our wicked enemies, unless when this appears the sole expedient for self-preservation, or the safety of the state against their machinations and efforts.*

But it is time to proceed to the other part of Mr. Voltaire's accusation, That the Jews were a carnal people. To fix this charge upon them, (the truth of which I mean not to deny however, though I believe it will be difficult to shew they merited this opprobrious appellation beyond their neighbours, as much as some persons, unfriendly to revelation, stigmatize

* About those imprecatory psalms, whoever would be more fully informed of the reasonings of the learned, may consult Sykes's Introduction to his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Kennicott's Examination of the Hebrew text, Hammond and Merrick's Annotations on the Psalms, and Chandler's Review of the History of the Man after God's own heart, sect. 22. I had once resolved to omit taking any notice of them, as Mr. Voltaire's account of them was agreeable to all versions, as well as the Vulgate; while, moreover, it seemed a faithful enough transcript thereof. But, on maturer consideration, I judged it better to make these remarks concerning them, as they have been frequent matter of offence to believers, and triumph to infidels, and have real difficulty in them. And though I should be found to have said little new, if I have explained the several opinions of able and inquisitive divines about them, to those who have not access to peruse their writings, and thereby brought into view any thing satisfactory, in which their minds can acquiesce, for solving the objections which have thence been raised, the pains bestowed will be amply recompenced.

them distinguishingly or eminently by it;) he is, I think, guilty of very unfair conduct; for he professes to quote these words from the cvii. psalm, † ‘Judah is a kettle full of meat. The mount of the Lord is a congealed mount, a fat mountain. Why do ye look upon the congealed mountains?’ But the first clause I cannot find at all. There is, indeed, in the Vulgate version of this psalm, according to the method of numeration, which it follows after the Greek, by joining the ninth and tenth psalms of the Hebrew psalter together, and counting them only one, but according to the Jewish, and our manner of computing, the cviii. a sentence which hath some resemblance to it: ‡ ‘Moab is the kettle of my hope.’ And in like manner, in the lix. of that translation, which is with us the lx. it is said, ‘Moab || is the pot of my hope.’ But no where in it have I been able to discover Mr. Voltaire’s scrap, not even among the various readings gathered from different manuscripts thereof, by the divines of Louvaine, and published by Plantin at Antwerp. Besides, our translation of it is far more just than any such rendering would be, did it at all lurk in some copy of the Vulgate; and it cannot be pretended it is to be met with in any other version. ‘Moab is my washing pot,’ § says

† Page 212. ‡ ‘Moab lebes spei meae.’ || ‘Moab olla spei meae.’

§ The Hebrew in both places, runs, מִיּוֹבַב כִּי יִרְחֹץ *Moab fir rahatzi*, of which the literal import is, ‘Moab is a pot for my washing.’ Which is excellently illustrated in Gataker’s Cinnus, lib. 2. cap. 19. by a story from Herodotus. Amasis, king of Egypt, finding himself despised for the meanness of his extraction and breeding, contrived to break in pieces a golden basin in which he and his guests had been accustomed to wash their feet, and to make it into an image of a god.

David, to denote the reduction of the Moabites by his arms to the most abject and ignominious servitude.

As to the rest of the passage which he produces, I suppose it is his translation of the words of the Vulgate, in Psalm lxvii. (with us, as with the Hebrews, the lxviii.) for they run thus, 'Mons Dei mons pinguis, mons coagulatus, mons pinguis. Ut quid suspicamini montes coagulatos?' And I allow they were also intended to express the sense of the Septuagint; as indeed learned men know, that the translation of the Psalms, in the Vulgate version, is Jerome's translation of them from the Greek, instead of that which is called his translation from the Hebrew: for a regard to mens prejudices of education, which would not admit any great variation here, from what they had been accustomed to read and recite, or to hear read and recited in the church, persuaded to continue the public use thereof without these improvements which his superior knowledge of, and acquaintance with, the original language of the Psalter, qualified him to make in it.—Nevertheless, it may even be questioned, whether Mr. Voltaire hath given § the true and genuine mean-

And having found hereon, that all exceedingly honoured it, he admonished his people, that in the same manner they should have respected him when raised to the throne, though he was of low original; thus comparing himself, in his humble state, to a vessel or pot to wash the feet in. See Herodot. Euterpe; or, lib. 2. cap. 172. edit. Stephan. p. 177.

§ Whereas the epithet of 'congealed,' added to 'mountains,' awakes in the mind of an English reader, only the idea of their being covered with ice and snow, which is not very suitable to the other quality of richness and fruitfulness, if such be their general vesture;

ing which its expressions were designed to convey. Be this however as the reader pleases, is that Latin version itself here, just? It were easy to prove, though it were, it would not authorize the accusation against the Jews, in support of which it is brought, as much as they might deserve that charge on other accounts. For, may not a people celebrate the fertility of any part of their country, and praise God for it, without incurring the censure of carnal? But this is not my present scope. What I now insist on is, that the Vulgate does not exhibit the true sense of the Hebrew. Neither can I think that our own translation does it, which is, ‘The hill of God is as the hill of Basban, an high hill as the hill of Basban.’ Why ‘leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in, yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.’ And the reasons of this judgment will appear immediately.

It is remarkable that Pere Houbigant himself, hath departed far from the Vulgate here, for he * turns the passage, ‘The mountain of God is a fat

the appellation bestowed by the seventy interpreters, upon the mountain of God, *τετυρωμενον*, and upon the hills in general, *τετυρωμενα*, seems to have a relation to cheese, according to the constant use of the verb, and to denote a likeness in shape or figure thereunto: and may it not be thought this resemblance was also designed by the author of the Vulgate, since *coagulo* signifies, to thicken milk, or turn it into a curd.

* Vide Houbigant Bibl. in locum. He reads *ןשן* twice over which signifies, fat, rich, instead of *ןשן* upon no better foundation than this, that the Seventy, and Symmachus, and Theodotion, and the Arabic, which is very much a transcript of the Greek version, have *fat* in these places; and he supplies *ןשן* in the beginning of the 17th verse without any authority at all, apprehending the copiers to have passed

‘ mountain. The mountain of heights, (that is, the
‘ lofty mountain,) is a fat mountain. Why do ye
‘ mountains envy the mountain of heights? The
‘ mountain which God hath desired that he might
‘ inhabit, which also God will inhabit, for ever.’
And he supposes the psalmist to celebrate Zion, which
was more raised by its summit, under the name of
the mountain of God, on account of its fertility,
from the time of the settlement of the ark there,
through the same divine blessing which so signally
prospered the family of Obed-edom, while that sym-
bol of the Deity abode with them. And then to re-
buke the circumjacent or ambient hills, for casting
an invidious eye upon it, because it was honoured
with the prerogative of God’s residence upon it above
themselves; while in this reproof, he also fancies, he
alludes to the uneasiness of the neighbouring kings,
at his own success in war, and the rising glory of Je-
rusalem through his civil and military achievements,
wherefore they prepared to crush it. But though
the sense he gives be very elegant and beautiful, I
cannot adopt it as the just one. For to say nothing
at all of his giving a wrong translation of one phrase
over and over, of which afterwards, he takes such
unwarrantable liberties in altering and adding to the
text, as are with me a sufficient argument for reject-
ing his interpretation. While we retain the present
Hebrew text, we may, I think, provided we read the
passage as an interrogation, (which may be done with-
out any change of its original form, since in all pro-
bability no punctuation was used at first,) and pro-
it, when they saw it in their MSS. as a faulty and useless repetition
of the first syllable of the initial word there כִּי, כִּי

vided we give to every word its proper signification, explain it to have a meaning very spirited and worthy of the occasion, after this * manner. The psalmist first proposes a question, 'Is the hill of God (the hill which God hath chosen to inhabit, by the ark,) the hill of Bashan? Is it the hill with its craggy tops, (or eminences,) the hill of Bashan? Why look ye with envy, ye craggy hills?' On Zion, he means, as having the peculiar privilege to be the fixed seat of the divine symbol. Then the psalmist speaking of mount Zion, subjoins 'This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in. Yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.' And so I see Dr. Chandler hath interpreted it, who beautifully imagines these last words to have been sung in view of mount Zion, and even at the beginning of the ascent of the procession with the ark into it. Now, how apposite to the solemnity of the introduction of the ark thither! how consonant to the original this version, in opposition to the Vulgate, which our author follows,

* I reckon the term בָּשָׁן *Bashan* is a proper name, in which sense it occurs v. 22. and often elsewhere; a mountainous ridge to the east of the Jordan being so denominated, which belonged formerly to Og, but was afterwards conquered by the Israelites, and assigned to the half tribe of Manasseh, Joshua, xxii. 7. xxi. 6. It is celebrated in Scripture for the goodness of its pastures, and the excellency of its cattle, Deut. iv. 5. Ps. xxii. 13. Ezek. xxvii. 6. Micah, vii. 14. &c. As to הַרְרֵי בָּשָׁן in the 16th verse of the Psalm, it seems to denote strictly and literally, a hill with craggy summits or gibbous protuberances, while more hills of this kind are mentioned in the succeeding verse. So the famous Schultens hath observed in his notes on the Arabic conference of Haririus, that the הַרְרֵי בָּשָׁן v. 17. are to be turned 'Montes gibbosi, edito vertice praediti' Harir. Confess. 1. pag. 2. And having remarked in his Key to the Dialects, that

but perhaps ill expresses its intention at the same time! and how far from affording any handle to revile the Jews as a carnal people!

SECTION VI.

Of his affirming in his Treatise on Toleration, that Ezekiel speaks of pigmies, persons not above a cubit high.

TO these instances, I only add another from his Treatise on Toleration, where he is, I think, very injurious to Ezekiel, soon after the passage concerning him quoted thence in a former section. ‘Ezekiel,’ says Mr. Voltaire, speaks of pigmies, (*gamadim*) not

גמדין is, cheese, properly milk coagulated and gathered into greater clodders, from the root *גמ* Arab. *ghaban*, he adds that *גמ* is, gibbous, and that the original expression v. 17. signifies, gibbous mountains, mountains rough and unequal with tops, as the correspondent Arabic term is, rough, scabrous and uneven ground, and thence, a church-yard, a burial-place. *Clav. Dialect.* page 196, 197. In this sense too, Pagnin, Tremellius, and Geierus, do very much agree, as indeed Aquila the Jew, who is allowed to be no mean judge of the import of the Hebrew, turns it in his Greek translation, browed hills, *ωφρυόμενα*. Then the verb which is rendered in the Vulgate and Seventy, to look upon, and by us, after good critics, to leap, is properly used of a wild beast lying in wait to catch its prey, upon which it looks with an oblique eye, and hence signifies, to envy, such a cast of the eye being a natural indication of this temper; and the address is not to men, as the Seventy and Vulgate make it, but to the surrounding hills by a *προσωποποιία*. Yet it will make little difference, though with the Chaldee we translate it, ‘Why leap ye?’ viz. with over-valuation of yourselves; or with Aquila, ‘Why strive ye?’ viz. in point of dignity and honour. Compare Chandler’s *Life of David*, vol. 2. p. 72.

‘above * a cubit high, who fought at the siege of
‘Tyre.’ And he undoubtedly alludes to the 11th
verse of that prophet’s 27th chapter, where the Vul-
gate has, ‘Sed et pygmaei, qui erant in turribus
‘tuis, pharetras suas suspenderunt in muris tuis
‘per gyrum;’ but we have, ‘O Tyrus, the Gam-
‘madims were in thy towers; they hanged their
‘shields upon thy walls round about.

But is there not the same cause of complaint here,
as on other occasions? I acknowledge indeed, some
like him have understood pygmies, persons of a cu-
bit’s heighth, who were dextrous at shooting with
arrows, to be here intended. They are not however
even all who adhere to the Vulgate version, for some
of them make the sense of its † *pygmaei* to be, not
men of so low and puny stature, but men strong
and robust, able at fist, or fit for combat. Nay the
notion of pygmies is not only opposed by Protestants,
who pay less regard to that translation, as Junius
and Grotius, the last of whom pleasantly † ridicules
the choice of such defenders as only proper in a war
against cranes, but also by writers of the Romish
church who reverence it most, as Cornelius a Lapide,
who observes, that all the stories of Homer, Aristotle,

* I suppose every reader knows the Jewish cubit was twenty-one
inches or thereabouts.

† As Menochius and others, who derive the word from the Greek
πυγμα, in the sense of, fight or fist; which seems also to have been
Jerome’s explication, who framed that translation. Vid. Scapul. Le-
xicon, voc. *πυγμαγοι*.

‡ ‘Bene’ says he upon the text, ‘si cum gruibz bellandum fuit.
‘Alioqui quorsum ad militiam deligeret eos,

‘Quorum tota cohors pede non est altior uno.

F

Ovid and Pliny, about nations or tribes of such human beings, black and hairy all over, situated on the Ethiopic shore of the Red Sea, had been confuted by * Aldrovandus, Gellius and Cardan, as unworthy of any credit. Why then does Mr. Voltaire attempt to pass it upon us as the incontestable and true meaning of Ezekiel? It seems most probable that the term † *Gammadim*, if it be the genuine reading, was the

* See Pol. Synopsis in loc. The falshood of these tales hath been also shewn by Julius Caesar Scaliger, Jo. Vossius, Isaac Casaubon, and more lately by the learned Fabricius, professor of divinity at Hamburgh, whatever sports of nature, if I may use the expression, there have been through different countries, in respect of the extremely diminutive size of this or that individual of our kind, even as such may be found also among the brute species; See Fabricii Sylloge Opusculorum, &c. where he hath a dissertation 'De hominibus orbis nostri incolis, specie et or-
'tu avito inter se non differentibus,' in opposition to Peyrerius's book, who endeavoured to prove from the variety of figure, colour, and stature among mankind, that all were not sprung from the same common parent; by which topic, Mr. Voltaire likewise endeavours to discredit the Scripture account of our common original, Phil. of Hist. chap. 2. page 5. &c.

† אַמְרִי Mr. Hallet, in the third volume of his notes on Scripture texts, disallowing the notion that a nation is meant here, supposes the Jewish transcribers have misspelt the word, writing אַמְרִי instead of אַמְרִי as it must have been in the more correct Hebrew copies, from which the Greek, Arabic, and Syriac versions were made, and renders the whole verse thus, 'The men of Arvad, with thine army, upon thy walls round about were the guards in thy towers;' The rather that the Syriac seems to have been made in this place directly from the Hebrew text itself, since it does not here follow the Greek, as the Arabic does. But this I am inclined to think too bold an emendation upon such authority alone; the more that the Chaldee has *Cap-padoces*, Symmachus *Μηδοι*, and Theodotion *Γαμμαδεμ*. Nor do the copies even of the Seventy concur to support the reading he would substitute. For the Complutensian edition disjoins this sentence from

name of a people in Phenicia, or in some adjacent country, tho' they may be now unknown, since they appear among other foreign soldiers who were auxiliaries to the Tyrians, as the best critics † do agree.

SECTION VII.

That the Vulgate translation favours these accounts, which Mr. Voltaire hath given, is no sufficient apology for his fairness and candour.

THUS, to name no more examples under this class, hath Mr. Voltaire detracted from Scripture, mocked at its relations, and reproached the Jewish prophets and people, upon the authority of the Vulgate chiefly or solely. And is it not dishonourable in him, to have thrown out such scoffs and censures as he hath done, where he had no better foundation for them?

the preceding, and turns it, *Αλλα και Μηδοι εν τοις πυργοις σου ησαν φυλακες*, 'But even the Medes were guards in thy towers.'

† So Michaelis understands the word in his Bible: for had the Medes been intended, they would have been introduced sooner with the Persians and others, at the same great distance; and refers to Pfeiffer in his *Dubia Vexata*, and Ludolf in his *History of Ethiopia*, as strongly supporting it.—It is an ingenious conjecture of Grotius, that the inhabitants of Ancon, in Phenicia, are so called, as *αγκων* in the Greek tongue signifies a cubit like *קֹדֶשׁ* in the Hebrew. Judges, iii. 16.—Vonder Hardt, in his *Detecta Mythologia Graecorum*, understands the inhabitants of Megiddo, a town belonging to the Manassites, on the coast of the Mediterranean sea, as does the anonymous author of *Observationes Philologicae et Geographicae*, printed at Amsterdam, 1748; but, so far as I can judge, without any probability. Indeed, who they were, cannot, in my opinion, be ascertained. Only they seem to have

It may be pled in his behalf, The council of Trent, whose decrees are received with profound respect by the church of Rome, in the ceremonies of which our author, if we may credit public accounts, * at times joins, declared this translation authentic, and prohibited the use of any other, either in the disputations of the schools, or in public worship, upon any pretext whatsoever; wherefore, he cannot be blamed for unfairness and disingenuity, in making it his guide.

But I answer, It can scarce be imagined, that a man of so free a spirit as our author, ever understood this council by the term, authentic, to signify, that it was exempted from all faults and mistakes, and entitled to an entire submission through all its parts, as if it was the pure and uncorrupted original. For such a sense hath been exploded and disclaimed by the most able Papists themselves, as cardinal Pallavicini, Pere Simon, and others, † who contend it

been people of Phenicia, or the neighbourhood, as Arvad or Arad, whose men are mentioned in the same verse, was a maritime place in Phenicia. See Reland. Palæst. p. 137, 216, &c.

* London Chronicle, May 16,—18. of the last year, page 2. column 2. ‘ Mr. de Voltaire, not content with performing the customary ceremonies observed at Easter, by the church of Rome, made a kind of sermon, containing his confession of faith, during the holidays, to a very numerous congregation, and took two notaries public, to witness to the orthodoxy of it.’

† See Simon’s *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, liv. 2. sect. 19. The same hath been also the interpretation of the decree by later writers. Towards the end of last century, there was published by Natalis Alexander, a Parisian divine, and regent of a college of preaching friars, ‘ A Dissertation concerning the Errors which still remained in the Vulgate version, after its correction by order of Clement VIII.’

was only the intention of the council to assert, that it was, in general, a good and faithful translation, though not without its errors and flaws; wherefore they observe, the same council, which pronounced the decree in favour of its authenticity, ordered also its correction and amendment. But supposing Mr. Voltaire interpreted their words in that high sense, which is only embraced by the greatest bigots of the Romish church, it can never be thought that he did not look upon the claim as absurd and ridiculous. Especially, when such variations are to be found between the two editions of that version itself, which

(of this presently) 'and which might be rectified by authority of the church.' 'Differtatio circa Sphalmata,' &c. Being attacked for this, as inconsistent with the decrees of the council of Trent, which appointed the Vulgate version to be received as authentic, he defended himself, saying, He still revered these, as the council's meaning only was, that it was to be preferred to every other translation; not that it was to be esteemed beyond the original Hebrew and Greek text: which he endeavoured to show by the testimonies of Alphonsus Salmero who was present at it, and of Andreas Vega, and of other theologians of the Romish church.—Act. Erudit. Decemb. 1682.

In like manner, about the sixteenth year of this century, Passini, doctor in theology, and lecturer on the Oriental languages in the college of Padua, hath declared his sentiments about the import of the decree; for, speaking of the Vulgate version's being approved and declared authentic by the council of Trent, sess. 4. can. 2. he has these words, 'Non ut fontibus Graecis et Ebraicis sit praeferrenda, sed aliis Latinis versionibus, relictis exemplaribus in eodem authenticæ statu quo prius fruebantur.' And so concludes they never intended to restrain their industry, who, through greater skill in the original languages, were able to propose a sense more commodious and just than that which it expressed, however it might be no way contrary to faith and sound morals. *Differtatio Polemica de praecipuis S. S. Bibliorum linguis et versionibus.* Apud Suppl. Act. Lipsiae, tom. 7. anno 1721.

have been patronized by their supreme ecclesiastic authority. For the edition by pope Sixtus V. (though, in his bull prefixed, he approved it by the apostolic power, which the Lord Jesus Christ had committed to him, and enacted its universal use as true and incontestable, forbidding to change any, even the smallest particle, and declaring that such alteration should have no faith nor weight,) and that by pope * Clement VIII. his successor, in the year 1592, do often differ; while this pope again in his preface, after all his rectifications of it in several places, and some of them important ones, owns there was still room to mend and improve the translation. Accordingly, we know many doctors of that church have been endeavouring in later times, to render it more perfect and accurate. Nay, father Houbigant within these few years hath given the world a new Latin version of the whole Old Testament from the Hebrew; an evidence he thought there might be a juster one than it was; as indeed, though he counted it more excellent than any of the former translations, he hath not scrupled to depart from its sense † frequently;

* This edition by Clement, was only three years later than Sixtus's. The varieties between these two editions, were collected and published by Thomas James, Bodleian library-keeper in the year 1600. in a small book thence stiled *Bellum Papale*, that he might expose to contempt the claim of the pope to infallibility. And some of them are manifest inconsistencies and contradictions, as these, Exodus, xxiii. 18. Sixtus's edition has *tuae*, Clement's *meae*. Deut. xvii. 8. Sixtus's has *inter lepram et non lepram*, Clement's *inter lepram et lepram*. Joshua, ii. 18. Six. has *signum non fuerit*; Clem. has *signum fuerit*, &c.

† See his Prolegomena to his Hebrew Bible, and notes passim.

and even to reason against it in many instances.— Besides, Mr. Voltaire himself, though he hath sometimes laid hold of the sense of the Vulgate as the sure and infallible one, where it gave him any colour or pretext to laugh, hath at other times given a sense very different and contrary, where such desertion of it was needful to answer his view, and gratify him with the pleasure of deriding the sacred writings. So that he will with a very * bad grace alledge its authenticity to be an article of his creed, either in the more rigorous or moderate sense which hath been put upon that term of the council, in excuse for his misleading his readers by adherence to it, in the passages which I have censured. Of this we have seen an example or two a little before. But I produce below, some others to justify the remark more fully. The rather that I am scarce to take any more notice of them.

* Thus in the forty-third chapter of his Phil. of History, 'Micaiah,' says he, 'having prophesied misfortunes to king Ahab and Josaphat, another prophet named Tzedekiah, son to Cana, gave him a slap on the face, saying, "The Spirit of the Eternal has passed from my hand upon thy cheek." pag. 204. But were these his words according to the Vulgate? No. They are there, 'Hath the Spirit of the Lord then forsaken me, and spoken to thee? Mene ergo dimisit Spiritus Domini, et locutus est tibi?' 3 Reg. xxii. 24.—In the forty-eighth chapter again, he says, according to the Jews, 'God walks in the garden at mid-day.' pag. 230. But in the Vulgate it is, 'At the breeze after noon; Ad auram post meridiem.' Gen. iii. 8. which agrees much with our translation, 'In the cool of the day.'—Once more, in his Philosophical Dictionary he writes, 'Ezekiel, in the 28. chapter of his Revelations, gives the appellation of Messiah to the king of Tyrus, whom he also calls, Cherubim.' But is this account of the address, which the Lord bids the prophet make to the king of Tyrus,

So much for his misrepresentations of Scripture, on the authority of the Vulgate version. And must it not appear a great want of candour in him, to have cavilled at its accounts thereof, when it is acknowledged to labour under many inaccuracies and mistakes, by the most learned of that communion where it is most admired, and is in fact disagreeable to the original, in the passages which he studies to expose from it to ridicule? Is not this conduct also the more inexcusable in him, that he himself discovers so small deference and veneration for it, as not seldom to give a different view of the meaning of the Sacred Books from that which it exhibits?

agreeable to the Vulgate translation? Far otherwise. Whereas he makes the prophet say to him, 'Thou wast the seal of the likeness of God,' The Vulgate hath no more than, 'Thou wast the seal of likeness. Tu 'signaculum similitudinis;' which is expounded by most commentators that allow the justice of this rendering, of his having the perfection of the likeness or similitude of a king, though destitute of extensive territory.—And whereas he represents the prophet to continue, 'Thou wast the Lord's garden of Eden.' It hath, 'Thou wast in the delights of the Paradise of God.' In deliciis Paradisi Dei fuisti.—And, not to point out all differences there, whereas he makes the prophet say, 'Thou hast a Cherubim, a Messiah.' It hath not one syllable of Messiah or Anointed, but runs, 'Thou art a foreign Cherub,' or as some would read it, 'Thou art a Cherub stretched out and covering. Tu 'Cherub externus (ut alii. extensus,) et protegens,' on account of the defence and tuition the prince of Tyre afforded to other cities and states. See the Dictionary, article Messiah, page 265. and compare Ezek. xxviii. 12, 13. in Vulgate version.—But it were endless to enumerate all his deviations from it, in his details from, and professed citations of Scripture, and to convict him thereof, by instituting a comparison betwixt the one and the other. Enough must strike every reader in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

Of his misrepresentations of Scripture, for which he cannot plead the authority of any † translation.

HAVING now pointed out several false accounts of the meaning of Scripture by Mr, Voltaire, for which he had, as seemed candid to acknowledge, the authority of the Vulgate version; I proceed to his far more numerous misrepresentations, thereof, in which he is unsupported by any translation. And certainly he must be here much more criminal. I do not however intend to produce all instances of this kind that might be collected, even from these treatises of the author which I criticise. Nor can I think it necessary. It may be sufficient to shew, that he is with great frequency guilty of such dissingenuous conduct. For must not this satisfy every person, that he ought to be very cautious about receiving his accounts of the Bible implicitly, who appears so keen to traduce it, that he pays little regard to truth in his details from it, wherever to neglect this, can serve his end of exposing the Sacred Books to ridicule? and by consequence, guard him

† This seems to me the character of all the instances I mention except two or three, and I have thought it needless, as they are so few, to use any restriction in the title of this chapter. What pretence there is of the authority of a translation, shall be taken notice of upon these articles, as they occur, when I hope it will also appear, that the meaning he affixes to the words thereof is unreasonable, and that another sense is to be preferred to that which he hath chosen amidst some ambiguity.

against being imposed on, through a slothful omission to read and examine the same.

SECTION I.

Of his saying, that the Jews are reproached for copulation with he and she-goats in the desert, and forbidden the same, in chapter second of his Philosophy of History,

IN chapter second of his * Philosophy of History, Voltaire having observed, ‘ Herodotus in his second book says, that in his voyage into Egypt, there was a woman in the province of Mendes, who publicly copulated with a he-goat; and calls all Egypt to witness the truth of it.’ He subjoins, ‘ It is forbidden in Leviticus, chap. xvii. to commit abominations with he and she-goats. These copulations must then have been common,’ &c. Again in chap. xxxv. † having affirmed, ‘ The Jews carried on the trade, (of magic,) as soon as they were dispersed over the world. The forcerers sabbath is an evident proof of this.’ He adds, ‘ And the he-goat with which the forcereffes were supposed to have copulated, is derived from the antient correspondence the Jews had with goats in the desert, with which they are reproached in Levit. xviii.’ And the same thing he had said in his Treatise on Toleration, with some enlargement, as will appear presently.

According to our author then, the Jews were censured for this detestable crime in particular, and a special caveat against it was contained in their law,

* Page 7.—8.

† Page 166.

But in the xviii. chapter of Leviticus, which is the place referred to for proof that the foul charge was brought against this people, I see no colour for the assertion at all. For sure it implies no such accusation, that in the twenty-third * verse there is a prohibition of all mixture with brute animals, whether of the male or female sex, as one of the many abominations with which the Canaanites were defiled, and for which the Lord did determine to extirpate them from their land, to make room for their own settlement in it.

I suppose, therefore, that his intention was to send us to chap. xvii. for evidence that the reproach was cast upon them, as he does for our conviction that the shocking vice was forbidden them; and that to support the heavy imputation, he translates ver. 7th thus, ‘They shall no more offer their sacrifices to he-goats, after which they have gone a-whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them, throughout their generations.’ Instead of which we have, ‘They shall no more offer their sacrifices to devils, &c.’ And thus I see in the Treatise on Toleration he says, ‘The Jews in the book of Leviticus are commanded no more to offer their sacrifices to goats, with whom they have gone a-whoring.’

But here let it be observed, though the Hebrew שְׂעִירִים *segnirim*, were to be turned *goats*, as it is indeed in Levit. xvi. 7, 8. and other places, there would be no sufficient ground for his reflection, that

* Yet Voltaire in his Treatise on Toleration, chap. 12. pag. 259. refers to this text as a proof, though by mistake he calls it Levit. xviii. 22. instead of Levit. xviii. 23. as he does to the words next cited, though he names chap. vii. for xvii.

the Israelites copulated with these creatures. For to go a-whoring after the gods of the nations, to go a-whoring after wizards and such as have familiar spirits, are common expressions in the Old Testament for the defection of the Israelites from the worship and obedience of Jehovah, to serve idol deities, and to consult forcerers, where no gratifications of lewdness obtained at all, as may be seen by Exod. xxxiv. 12.—16. Deut. xxxi. 16. Levit. xx. 5. &c. and the phraseology appears very natural, when it is considered, that therein they violated that fidelity and duty to God, who was pleased to assume the character and relation of a husband to them, for which they had undertaken. It would therefore only follow, that they are warned against the oblation of sacrifices to goats in time to come, and upbraided with the practice of such worship to them in time past. Nor have there been wanting some, who have proposed this as the true sense in part, while they have been of opinion, that the worship of these beasts in Egypt was so antient as the days of Moses, and gone into by the Jewish people during their residence there, in imitation of their masters. So Bochart mentions it as one interpretation of the passage, that it might * relate to the hairy deities in general, such as oxen, dogs, monkeys, wolves, and goats, which the Egyptians adored, and in favour of it, remarks that *רַעַר* *sagnar* is *to be rough*, and *רַעַר* *segnar* is *rough, hairy*, Gen. xxv. 25. Ps. lxviii. 21. Zach. xiii. 4. For he has no doubt, that among them this strange worship had its original, though our author, in the Treatise on Toleration, speaks with un-

* Bochart Hierozoic. p. 1. lib. 2. cap. 53. pag. 648.

certainly about it, ' We cannot say, whether this
' strange worship came from Egypt, the country of
' forcery and superstition, as much as Greeks and
' Romans treat it as its peculiar extravagance and
' folly.'

It deserves attention however, that the Samaritan, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate versions, together with all the Hebrew doctors, as the same Bochart * confesses, have understood the word to signify daemons, or wicked and mischievous beings of a superior order, who might be so called, because they were believed to appear in a rough and hairy form, or because they created terror and perturbation of mind to mortals, so as to make their hair stand on end, suitably to which קַעַץ is used not only concerning the erection of the hairs in the body, but also concerning the passions of fear and astonishment in the soul, of which that is a natural indication and frequent attendant. And in this way likewise will the Seventy be acknowledged to go, by those who reflect that these malevolent spirits were concerned in abetting the absurd and immoral devotions of the Gentiles, since they translate the term both here and 2 Chron. xi. 14. by *τοὺς παρανοίας vanities*. Even Le Clerc, who prefers the sense of goats here, says, that cacodaemons in general are intended, because they were worshipped by the Egyptians under the figure of a goat, for certain mystical and symbolical reasons. But whatever doubt there † may be, whether the E-

* Bochart Hieroz. pag. 643.

† The learned Dr. Warburton contends, that the adoration of living animals did not yet prevail in Egypt, but only of their pictures or images, from the tenor of the second commandment, and from the

gyptians worshipped goats so early, by consequence, whether the Israelites had been contaminated with this monstrous superstition, after their example, at the time of Moses's legislation; there can be no room to pretend, that both had not been guilty before this period of idol-worship in other forms, and the children of Israel in imitation of the Egyptians, if we look into Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7, 8. Ezek. xxiii. 1, 2, which is a good reason for the preference of the last interpretation.—There is therefore no ground to affirm, that copulation with he and she-goats is forbidden the Israelites, except as this falls under the general prohibition of lying with brute animals, which does not serve Mr Voltaire's purpose.

Nor yet will this shew, that the sin of bestiality was then very common among them. So indeed he reasons in the last mentioned treatise, while he also says with shameless impudence, that ' Their lawgiver contents himself with simply prohibiting these infamous and unnatural practices, which deserved punishment at least equal, to that which befel them for worshipping the golden calf.' For,' he goes on, ' the sin of bestiality must certainly have been very common amongst them, since they are the only people we know, among whom there was a necessity for any law to prohibit that crime, the commission of which was not even suspected by any

erection of the golden calf instead of a living one, which would have been a less expensive symbol, and other arguments. Div. Leg. vol. 3. p. 204. So do others reckon it more recent than Moses's days. In the mean time they might religiously abstain from killing, from reverence of these images, which must account on this hypothesis, for Exod. viii. 26.

‘ other legislators.’ And then supposes, ‘ the female species, which is always the weakest, to have failed amongst them through the fatigues and distresses of the desert.

But is not this vice expressly made capital in every individual who should commit it, by the founder of their polity, while the brute also, to inspire the greater horror and detestation of it, is devoted to destruction; Levit. xx. 15, 16. ‘ If a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death, and ye shall slay the beast, and if a woman approach any beast to lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman and the beast; they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.’ And is not national corruption, in respect of this as well as other enormities, threatened with ejection from the land of Canaan? Says Moses, ‘ Defile not yourselves in any of these things,’ after naming this abomination last,—‘ that the land spue not you out also when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.’ Adding also, ‘ Whosoever shall commit any of these abominations,—shall be cut off from among their people.’ Levit. xix. 24, 28, 29. Farther, how unreasonable is it to argue, it was prevalent and epidemical among them at the giving of the law, in the manner he does?—Would Moses then have been silent about their pollution with it, whose frequent manner it is, as of the prophets who succeeded him, while he warns them against the future practice of crimes, to reproach them with their past commission of them? Is not the disorder declared to be prohibited, because it reigned among the Canaanites, whose territory they were to be introduced into? ‘ Defile

‘ not yourself in any of these things, for in all these
 ‘ the nations are defiled, which I cast out before you,
 ‘ wherefore the land vomiteth out its inhabitants, &c.’
 Levit. xviii. 24, 25, 27. And was not its common-
 ness with them a sufficient reason for its discharge,
 though the Israelites were hitherto untainted, espe-
 cially as they shewed a proneness to form their man-
 ners upon the customs of their wicked neighbours?
 Finally, where is any evidence of such a failure of
 the more delicate sex, as he supposes? of this there
 is not one word in the sacred history, under all the
 toils of the desert, though upon other occasions,
 where a great loss of this sort happened, there is a
 clear and full account; and as to their being up-
 braided for such correspondence with goats in the
 desert, in Levitic. xvii. we have seen there is no foun-
 dation for his assertion of it.

I shall only subjoin, ere I leave this article, as to
 the testimony of Herodotus; though he had said,
 these base practices were common in his time among
 the Egyptians, it would have been no solid proof, that
 they prevailed among them so early, for there was
 an interval between Moses and him of almost 900
 years, according to Voltaire * himself, which makes
 him travel in Egypt much too late, to be a good wit-
 ness of the customs thereof, while the Jews abode in

* This I make out in this manner. In chap. 38. of his *Phil. of History*, pag. 18. he represents Hesiod and Homer, and the first Archons of Athens, to have lived nearly about the time of Solomon. But Herodotus tells us, that he reckoned Hesiod and Homer four hundred years older than himself, lib. 2. p. 124. Solomon again it is certain, flourished about 480 years after the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, 1 Kings vi. 1. By consequence, the Greek historians

it, from what he saw or heard to have been done in his own time. But indeed he does not express himself about the fact, which is quoted from him, as a thing ordinary, but calls it a prodigy, an unusual and unprecedented phaenomenon, and may be thought to intimate by his form of expression, that it was rather owing to violence on the part of the *brute. The same observation about the length of time which intervened, may be applied to Pindar's account of such hateful practices among the Egyptians in his age; with still greater force, should any be inclined to urge the passage quoted from him by † Strabo, in support of their so great antiquity there. For Pindar was still later than Herodotus, being forty years old when Xerxes passed over into Greece, whose march is placed 520 years after Solomon succeeded to the throne, by Usher and other chronologers, on very satisfying evidence.

would flourish at no less distance from the Exodus, than almost 900 years. The words of Herodotus before referred to, run thus, 'Ἡσίοδον καὶ Ὅμηρον ἡλικίῃ τετρακοσίοισι ἔτεσι δοκέω μὲν πρὸς βυτίους γενέσθαι, καὶ ἔτι πλεονέχει, ' I reckon Hesiod and Homer older than me by 400 ' years and no more.'

* Ibid. pag. 121. Εὐγένητο δὲ—ἐπ' ἐμὲν τὴν τοῦ τερασ' ἡλικίαν
κί τραγῶς ἐμίσγετο ἀναφανδόν· τὴν τοῦ εἰς ἀποδείξιν ἀνθρώπων ἀπικέλει
† Strabo Geogr. 17. 551.

SECTION II.

Of his making Jephtha and Jeremiah acknowledge the divinity of Melcom and Chamos, in chapter fifth of his *Philosophy of History*, and in other works.

TO proceed, in chapter fifth of his *Philosophy of History*, our author writes, ‘ This idea (that every people was really protected by the divinity they had chosen) was so deeply rooted in men, that in after-times it was adopted by the Jews themselves. Jephtha said to the Ammonites, “ Do you not possess, by right, what your lord Chamos has given you? Suffer us then to possess the land which our lord Adonai, has promised unto us.” There are two other passages equally strong, which are those of Jeremiah and Isaiah, where it is said, “ What reason had the lord Melcom to take possession of the land of Gad.” It is evident by these expressions, that the Jews, though servants to Adonai, acknowledged, nevertheless, the lord Melcom and the lord Chamos.’ And he both cites and reasons much in the same way, both in his *Philosophical Dictionary*†, and in his *Treatise of Toleration*, as will be seen in our progress.

But is there not here again a false representation of Scripture, as there is also an unjustifiable conclusion from it?

The former, I think, cannot be denied as to Jeph-

† *Philos. Dictionary*, article Religion, p. 310. and article Toleration, p. 349. and *Treatise on Toleration*, chap. 12: p. 172; 173.



tha's words; for Jephtha,* in his message to the Ammonites, neither uses the expression, our lord Adonai, at all, nor contrasts with Chemosh's grant of the country which the Ammonites possessed, the God of Israel's bare promise, that he would bring them into the enjoyment of the land of Canaan. No. Though Mr. Voltaire would make us believe, that he only called him Adonai, he speaks of the God of Israel under the name of Jehovah, which was the distinguishing appellation by which the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world, revealed himself to the Jews, and under which also he was worshipped by them, in opposition to idol deities, in the times of Moses and the prophets; whatever disuse of pronouncing it, superstition may have introduced among their posterity since. See Exod. iii. 15, 16. xv. 2. &c. Josh. xxiv. 2. Judg. xi. 31, 35; 36. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Isaiah, xlv. 5, 6. In like manner also, elsewhere, Mr. Voltaire would persuade us, his votaries gave him no other title than Adonai; I suppose, because he was solicitous the God of the Jews should be looked on as the same with the contemptible divinity of the Phenicians in their neighbourhood, whose name was Adonis. But there is equal falshood in the allegation.† Moreover, the Jewish general opposes to Chemosh's donation to the Ammonites of the land which they

* Judges, xi. 12, &c.

† In Phil. of Hist. chap. 25. p. 119. he says, 'In Exodus we read, "Honour thy father and mother, that Adonai may prolong thy days upon it;" but it is, "That Jehovah thy God may prolong," &c. Treat. on Tolér. p. 159. he makes the people say, Josh. xxiv. "We will serve the Lord our God (*Adonai*)," when there is no such expression as *Adonai* there; but, "We will serve Jehovah our God."

occupied, this Jehovah's bringing the Israelites into the fruition of Canaan, by enabling them, through his victorious power, to defeat and extirpate the old inhabitants, instead of his mere engagement that he would do so, as our author sets forth. That every one may see this to be the truth, the passage stands thus, Judg. xii. 29. Jephtha said unto the king of the children of Ammon by his messengers,—‘ Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the ‘ LORD our God, shall drive out from before us, ‘ them will we possess.’ Where Jehovah, as generally in our translation, is turned LORD, in capital letters; as it is said just before, v. 15. that this ‘ LORD ‘ God of Israel, had dispossessed the Amorites from ‘ before his people Israel.’ *

As to the other words indeed, which Voltaire professes to quote from Jeremiah and Isaiah, but which are to be found in Jeremiah alone, xlix. 1. ‘ Why ‘ doth Melcom inherit Gad?’ (though still willing to have two authorities for them, he sends us, in his Philosoph. Dictionary †, to Amos as well as Jeremiah, in vain search of them,) I find no fault with him for unfair dealing. It is perhaps true, מלכם should rather be translated *their* (the Ammonites) *king*, as in our version both here, and v. 3. and in Amos, i. 15. where is mention of מלכם and his princes going

* Agreeably, Voltaire himself thus states the opposition in his Philosophical Dictionary, ‘ You lawfully possess what your god Chamos has made you conquer, and you ought to let us quietly enjoy what ‘ our God has given us by his victories.’ Pag. 310, 349.

† ‘ Jérémie and Amos both ask, “ Wherefore has the god Melch seized on the country of Gad.” Page 310.



into captivity together. But I am aware, that the same vocable, beyond controversy, denotes the idol of the Ammonites, 2 Kings, xxiii. 13. and is interpreted the same way by many persons of good learning, in this place of the prophet.

Why, however, does he deduce an inference both from Jephtha's and Jeremiah's words, which they will not authorize? Jephtha's application to the Ammonites, is no more than an 'argumentum ad homines,' as logicians call it; it being as if he had said, 'You believe you have a right to hold whatever Chemosh your god bestows upon you; in like manner, we think we are entitled to occupy and retain, whatever Jehovah our God gives us.' To this purpose speak two commentators § of very opposite characters, whose words I place below, the rather that our author sometimes appeals to them: nor can Jephtha be reasonably understood in a different manner, since it was altogether inconsistent with the principles

§ Le Clerc in loc. 'Hinc liquet Chamosum Ammonitarum numen, de quo ad Num. xxii. 18. diximus. Haec autem ratiocinatio Jephthae est ejusmodi argumentum ad hominem quod dicitur, in quo ex dogmatibus adversarii, non ex nostris ratiocinamur. Alioquin homini Hebraeo non licuit ita de diis gentium loqui, quasi Divinae Providentiae partem, rerumque humanarum ullam administrationem iis tribuerit.'

Calmet again on the place says, 'Jephtha reasons according to the idea of the Ammonites, or rather Moabites, in saying that Chamos their god, had given them this country; he believed not in this god, but by a figure of speech, which is called Concession, he is willing to suppose that which his enemies pretended.' And then says, 'Chamos is every where spoken of as the god of the Moabites in Scripture.' Numb. xxi. 29. 1 Kings, xi. 7, 33. 2 Kings, xxiii. 13. Jerem, xlviii. 13, 46. Sq. he.

of a Jew, to allow any of the gods of the nations a share in the disposal of human affairs.

Mr. Voltaire insists I own, in his *Treatise on Toleration**, that ‘Jephtha’s declaration, who was inspired by God, is, at least, an evident proof, that God permitted the worship of Chemosh. For the words of Holy Scripture are not, “Thou thinkest thou hast a right to possess that which thy god Chemosh giveth thee to possess,” but expressly “Thou hast a right to possess,” &c. For that is the true interpretation of the Hebrew words, “otho thirasch.”

But we do not read of any inspiration of Jephtha, till after he had sent this message to the king of the Ammonites; where probably also the expression, ‘The spirit of the Lord came upon him,’ *Judg. xi. 29.* denotes only that he felt a strong impulse from heaven to fight against these oppressors of the country, and was endowed with requisite skill and bravery, for the successful performance of the work.— Besides, our author falls here into a very gross mistake† in making ‘otho thirasch’ signify, ‘thou hast a right to possess;’ every person of moderate acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue knows, that these words in that language, denote no more than ‘thou wilt possess it,’ the verb *יָרָשׁ* *iarasch*, whose future tense occurs in the phrase, being indifferently applied to possession by unlawful‡ force and vi-

* Page 172, 173.

† Perhaps this was owing to a too secure reliance on the Vulgate version, which hath ‘Tibi jure debentur.’

‡ Of its being used concerning usurpation or unjust possession, *Judges, xix. 15. 1 Kings, xxi. 19.* are instances.

olence, and to possession by rightful title or just claim.—Further, supposing that Jephtha had enjoyed inspiration in the sense that Mr. Voltaire intends, and that the meaning of the original expressions was such as he represents, it would still remain to be proved, that Jephtha could not reason with the idolatrous prince whom he addressed, according to his false notions about Chemosh, unless he himself had also believed his divinity, which I fancy would be no easy task.†

With relation to the passage in Jeremiah again, if Melcom, the idol of the Ammonites, and not their king, be there designed, Jehovah is indeed introduced speaking about their invasion and seizure of the district which belonged to the tribe of Gad, after it should become desolate through Israel's captivity by the Assyrians, as if they had been without descendants who could occupy it, in the same manner in which these blinded Ammonites themselves would think and talk concerning it, 'That their god inherited the land of Gad.' But how absurd to interpret this, though it were the true sense, to be an ac-

† I cannot but remark, that Mr. Voltaire seems inconsistent with himself upon this subject. In his Philosophical Dictionary, page 310. he says, 'The Jews and Moabites had outed the natives with no other right than force, and one says to the other, Thy god hath supported thee in thy usurpation, allow my god likewise to support mine;' yet we have seen, in his Philosophy of History, he speaks of the Moabites or Ammonites, as he calls them, their possessing lawfully what Chamos gave them, or their holding it by right. And he must allow the same about the Jewish possession of the conquests which their God gave them, upon his own interpretation of *U'arafch*, because this word is also used with regard to their acquisitions. But could their possession be at once lawful and unlawful, just and unjust?

knowledge by Jehovah or his prophet, of his real power and Godhead, when the vanity and insignificance of the idols of the heathen, among which this was one, is every where declared by them; and here also it is asserted, that this Melcom, to whom they attributed their possession of that territory, would share the same calamities and distresses with them, unable to deliver himself more than his worshippers? For it follows, verse 3. 'Melcom shall go into captivity, with his priests and his princes together.'

Our author then, has misrepresented Jephtha's address, and argued ill both from his words, and those of the prophet, while he imputes to the Jews an opinion, that every nation was protected * by the god they had chosen. So far were they from entertaining this principle, and from believing in a multitude of deities, in pursuance of it, as they did who held the existence of local gods, of circumscribed dominion, and confined power, and limited presence, each presiding over his own province or territory, that they represent their God as the alone God of the universe, whose presence was without bounds, whose strength was uncontrollable, and from whose empire and sovereignty, no creature was exempt; as may be observed, Pf. cxxxix. 1,—12; 1 Kings, viii. 13, 27. 2 Kings, xviii. 34, 35. xix. 16,—19, &c. Moreo-

* So, however, he does also in his Philosophical Dictionary, article Religion, page 310. for after quoting the words from Jeremiah and Amos, above-recited, he adds, 'These passages shew that antiquity attributed a guardian god to every country.' 'Yea,' says he, page 349. article Toleration, 'the Jews worshipped their God, but never were offended at, or so much as thought it strange, that every nation had its own deity.' What gross misrepresentation is this? and how impossible to be reconciled with candour and ingenuity?

ver, they speak every where with scorn and contempt of the gods of the nations, and censure their votaries on all occasions for extreme folly and stupidity, Pf, xcvi. 5. cxv. 3,—8. cxxxv. 5,—18. *Isaiah*, xlv. 8, —25. xlv. 5,—10. *Jerem.* x. 1, 16.

SECTION III,

Of his asserting there and elsewhere, that the Jews, for forty years in the desert, worshipped no other God than idol deities.

IN the next paragraph of the same chapter,† says Mr. Voltaire, ‘Jeremiah, Amos, and St. Stephen, assure us that the Jews, for forty years in the desert, acknowledged no other God than Moloc, Remphan, and Kicim; that they made no sacrifice, and presented no offering to the lord Adonai, whom they afterwards adored. It is true that the Pentateuch speaks of nothing but the golden calf, which no prophet mentions: but this is not the place to clear up this great difficulty: it is sufficient, they equally revered Jeremiah, Amos, and St. Stephen, who seem to contradict one another, and yet are reconciled.’ This is a favourite topic with him, wherefore he touches it again in the thirty-fourth chapter; † ‘We have already seen, that when the Jews inhabited the eastern deserts of the lake Asphaltides, they carried the tabernacle of the god Remphan, of the god Moloc, of the god Kiam, according to Jeremiah, Amos, and St. Stephen.’ And before the publication of this piece, in his Treatise on Tolerance

† *Phil. of Hist.* page 17.

† Page 169.

tion, he had displayed it thus, § ‘ Several able commentators have been greatly puzzled to reconcile these books of Moses (where are rigorous laws and severe punishments in relation to religious worship) with several passages in the prophets Jeremiah and Amos, and with the famous discourse of St. Stephen, as related in the Acts of the Apostles. Amos says, “ That the Jews constantly worshipped in the wilderness Moloc and Chiun, gods whom they had made to themselves.” Amos, v. 26. And Jeremiah expressly says, “ That God commanded not their fathers concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices, in the day that he brought them out of the land of Egypt.” Jerem. vii. 22. And St. Stephen, in his discourse to the Jews above-mentioned, says, “ They worshipped the host of heaven, and that they neither offered sacrifices, nor slew beasts, for the space of forty years in the wilderness, but took up the tabernacle of Moloc, and the star of the god Remphan.” Acts, vii. 42.

But is this account fair? it must be evident to every one who will examine it by his Bible, that he appeals to Jeremiah as a voucher for a fact, about which he is wholly silent; and that he makes Rempham and Chiun (whom he twice misnames Kicim and Kiam) different idol deities, whom the Jews acknowledged in the wilderness, when Rempham is only the substitute for Chiun by the Seventy, whose translation of the Hebrew Stephen follows, whereby he has swelled the number of their idols from two to three, without any shadow of authority. The great point however remains. Does he give us a true ac-

§ Chap. 12. page 149, 150.

count of the sense of Amos and Stephen, with reference to the behaviour of the Jews toward Jehovah, and their treatment of the two divinities Moloc and Chiun, or Moloc and Remphan, whom they mention them to have honoured, while they abode forty years in the wilderness? I apprehend far from it.

Indeed it is not likely, that the Israelites should have forbore to present sacrifices to Jehovah their God, through the first forty years after they were prescribed by him with such awful solemnity; far less that they should have worshipped Moloc and Chiun, and carried their tabernacles or images in public processions continually through that period, while they were under the guidance of Moses himself, the visible founder, and zealous guardian of their law, which in so strong a manner prohibited all idolatry. And as it is not likely this should have been their conduct, so it is inconsistent with the Mosaic history to accuse them of it. For, though they gave too often into the worship of the gods which their old masters the Egyptians had served, and of the gods which they saw in the countries through which they * passed, it is manifest from the narrative, as much as we must suppose it does not descend into a detail of their practice in conformity to the instituted ritual, that they offered sacrifices to Jehovah in the desert, on various occasions, as at the confirmation of the covenant between God and them, *Exod. xxiv. 4.* at the consecration of the altar and tabernacle, *Num. vii.* and at the celebration of the passover, in

* This must be confessed from *Joshua xxiv. 14—23.* *Num. xxv. Ezek. xx. 5—26.* and *xxiii. 3—8.* And for it, in conjunction with their other wickednesses, they suffered severe judgments.

the second year of their pilgrimage, Num. ix. It cannot then be reasonably thought, that it was the intention of Amos and Stephen, to charge them with a total and uniform neglect to offer sacrifices unto the Lord through their residence there, which is so improbable to have happened, and so formally declared not to have been the case, in their own sacred books, which professedly give a relation of their manners during that interval.

But perhaps the words of Amos and Stephen are incapable of any other sense, than that which is so contradictory to the writings of Moses, and so repugnant to probability in their circumstances? quite otherwise. Wherefore I do not perceive, that any commentator ever put such a meaning upon the question, which they introduce God asking the people, ‘ Have ye offered, or did ye offer unto me ‘ sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, ‘ O house of Israel!’ Indeed it is sufficient to justify the question, (which according to the most common † use at least of such interrogative forms in Scripture, implies a more strong and pathetic denial,) to say, that they are upbraided by it with not bringing their

† I say, the most common use, 2 Sam. vii. 5. Zechar. Isai. l. 2. Jer. ii. 14. &c. For I am aware, that in some instances, these interrogatories are thought to contain a more vehement affirmation, by an ellipsis of the negative particle, wherefore our translators themselves have supplied it, that they might convey this meaning in Job, xx. 4. Gen. xxvii. 36. 2 Sam. xxiii. 19. and accordingly some have turned the question here, ‘ Have ye not offered to me?’ or ‘ Did ye not offer to me?’ as Grotius after the Seventy, as if it was God’s design to admonish them by it, how plain it was he laid greater stress on moral virtue and substantial holiness than on positive rites, since amidst all their exactness and accuracy in them in the desert, they had peri-

victims and oblations to him alone, or with not bringing them to him with a perfect and obedient heart, through that period, which was a strong proof of their perverseness and depravity, as the ordinances of God were then so recent, and the evidences of his superintendency over them were then so numerous and striking, both in the way of mercy and judgment. And then in the next sentence, they are reminded how they paid homage to certain false gods in his stead through that space, as in the manner specified, which was a still higher pitch of wickedness. I say, through that space; for I allow, as much disputed as it hath been, that the sense is, they had such processions then in honour of Moloc and Chiun, and not merely in later ages, the rather that Stephen quotes this text of Amos, ere he speak of their corruptions after their settlement in Canaan. And why might they not happen, especially in some parts of the camp, which was large and extensive, as well as other disorders of Gentile worship; which Moses expressly assures us were practised amidst all his vigilance and zeal? If he has not recorded such processions, this may have been, because they did not fall within these three years of their sojournings, the transactions and occurrences of which he chiefly relates; or if they did, because he studied brevity and conciseness: But that they did make such processions

there in great multitudes, or to set before them a great aggravation of their defection to serve their idols, that they had been long disciplined in, and inured to his worship. But the history contradicts so close and inviolate adherence to Jehovah through that space, as this sense supposes, and such use of the interrogative form, as what it proceeds upon is somewhat uncertain and doubtful.

ons, is no more an evidence that they did not offer sacrifices to Jehovah in the wilderness, than their worshipping Baal-peor there at one season, is a demonstration of it.

Should it be objected, it is an unnatural and violent restriction of the question, to expound the words as above; I answer, it is no more putting force upon them, than it is to interpret God's words to the restored Jews, Zechar. vii. 5. 'Did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me;' as a denial only, * that they had solemnized their fasts with right principles and dispositions.

* I have hitherto taken no notice of the passage quoted from Jeremiah; I remark therefore, it is literally true, that God did not prescribe the Mosaic ritual, till some time after their departure from Egypt, and their entrance into the wilderness. Besides, God may only intend there his preference of obedience to the rules of morality, above accuracy and regularity in animal sacrifices, as Prov. xxi. 5, &c. For it is the manner of the sacred writers, to introduce God denying one thing, and asserting another, when the meaning only is, that he values the former less than the latter, Hosea, vi. 6. as it is their way also to forbid us one thing and enjoin us another, when their design is only to inculcate less solicitude and earnestness about the former than the latter. Matt. vi. 19, 20. John, vi. 27. Coll. iii. 2. Either way, the text is of no avail to prove the point which Mr. Voltaire aims at in this Treatise, an unlimited toleration among the Jews, I can scarce believe, seriously. Indeed it must appear a most wild imagination to every person who recollects the tenor of God's grant of Canaan to them, his penal laws against idolatry, and against the seducement of others to it, and the judgments which he executed from time to time upon national guilt, this way, Exod. xxi. 3rd-6. Deut. xiii. 1-11, &c.

SECTION IV.

Of his saying also, in chapter fifth of the Philosophy of History, that the Jews borrowed their religious rites, in particular the red cow, from the Egyptians.—And that Moses espoused the daughter of an idolatrous Midianite.—That the Jews called Nabuchodonosor, and the idolater Cyrus, the anointed of the Lord.—That Jonah went to the idolater Ninivus.—And that Elisha allowed the idolater Naaman to go into the temple of Rimmon, therein contradicting their own law: upon most of which things he likewise touches in other places of his works.

IT does not fall within my present view to examine whether any ceremonies enjoined the Jews, were in antecedent use among the Egyptians, in their worship of idol deities: only whereas Mr. Voltaire says, ‘Like the Egyptians, the Jews accustomed themselves to make a distinction * of meats, and borrowed from them ablutions.—The hazel (scape) goat and the red cow,’ which seems to imply, that the practice of these rites among the Jews, was wholly founded in their own humour and caprice, that inclined them to imitate their late masters, it is proper to remark, that this is by no means the Scripture account of their observation thereof. For hence it is undeniably evident, that they were matter of divine requirement and prescription to that people. Accordingly it is confessed by all, without exception,

* Philosophy of History, page 18.

so far as I know, who give any credit to their sacred books, whatever controversy there may be, whether God did not adopt into that form of religion which he established for them, various ceremonies which obtained among heathen nations, especially the Egyptian, in condescension to the prejudices and prepossessions under which they laboured, in their favour, even as he indulged them in divorce for more frivolous reasons, from consideration of the hardness of their hearts. Nor can it be improper to add, while there is no such resemblance between the Mosaic ordinances, in these other articles above enumerated, and the Egyptian customs, as to authorize our concluding the former were an imitation of the latter, (though we could have that full satisfaction about their superior antiquity which we want,) it is above all ridiculous in him, to pretend the Israelites borrowed the red cow or heifer, about which we read God's order, Numb. xix. 1. from the Egyptians. For what reason can there be to persuade us, that they copied the oblation of this in sacrifice from them, when Herodotus † expressly assures us, ' They all held it unlawful to sacrifice cows of any colour, because they were sacred to Isis, and objects of worship or veneration;' and no other author in-

† Lib. 2: p. 118. edit. Steph. *Τὴν μὲν γὰρ καθαρὴν ἑστῶσαν τῶν βοῶν, καὶ τὴν μοσχὺς οἱ πάντες Αἰγυπτῆσιν θύουσιν· τὰς δὲ θηλιας ὡς σφί ἐξέστη θύειν· ἀλλὰ ἰσθαι εἰσι τῆς Ἰσίδος.* — *Τὰς βύες τὰς θηλιας Αἰγυπτῆσιν πάντες σέβονται,* &c. In order to a likeness here, therefore the Jews should not have offered a heifer, which when grown up is a cow, but a bull or bullock: for only the males of cattle did the Egyptians lay upon the altar. In particular, with one of them entirely red, slain as a victim, they were wont, we are told, to appease Typhon.

forms us, that in the earlier period, when the law was delivered from mount Sinai, a contrary usage prevailed.—If then there was in God's appointment of this victim, any reference to the sentiments and manners of the Egyptians, it must have been instituted in the way of opposition to them, for their greater security from the contagion of their idolatry, and all its attendant vices.

The author goes on—' Moses himself espoused ' the daughter of an idolatrous Midianite.'

But where learned he this? It is true the northern Midianites were addicted to the same idolatrous practices as the Moabites, on whose confines they dwelt: for they joined with them in their endeavour to seduce the children of Israel from the worship of Jehovah, to that of Peor. But how does it appear, that Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, who was a priest or prince of the southern Midianites, that bordered on the Red sea, was involved in the same corruption of principles and manners? Does not his whole language and behaviour, at his visit unto Moses in the wilderness, rather shew that his religion was pure and rational, whatever reason there may be, from the incident recorded at Moses's return from his house into Egypt, *Exod. iv. 25, 26.* to think that he disliked circumcision.—He rejoices for all the goodness which the Lord, or Jehovah, according to his son-in-law's report, had done to Israel.—He blesses Jehovah, who delivered them out of the hand of Pharaoh and his people.—He professes his belief, that Jehovah is greater than all gods, because in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.—He offers a burnt-offering and sacrifices to this God.

H

And when he proceeds, ere he take leave, to advise him to ease himself of his too heavy burden, by appointing subordinate rulers and judges for smaller matters, he directs him to chuse out of all the people; not only able men, but such as fear God. *Exod. xviii. 8,—23.*

Is this to speak and act like an idolater?—If he say, ‘Now I know that the Lord’ (Jehovah) ‘is greater than all gods,’ it no more follows from this expression, that he was formerly a votary of idol deities, than from the words of the angel, *Gen. xxii. 12.* that he was formerly unacquainted with Abraham’s superior and prevalent fear of God.—Or from the words of the widow of Zarephath, unto Elijah, on his recovery of her son to life, *1 Kings, xvii. 24.* ‘Now I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth,’ that she was ignorant before of his prophetic character, which none can imagine, who recollect the comfortable proof she had enjoyed, of the truth of his assurance, That the handful of meal in the barrel should not waste, nor the cruse of oil fail, till the Lord would send rain upon the earth, and put an end to the famine.

In the sentence which succeeds, he censures the Jews as ‘inconsistent, while they made an outcry against strange worships, yet called in their sacred books, Nabuchodnosor, the anointed of the Lord; and the idolater Cyrus also, the anointed of the Lord.’

But I cannot discover, that they any where bestow this appellation upon Nebuchadnezzar; though I know Jeremiah introduces God himself, the founder

of their law, stiling him his servant, Jerem. xxv. 9. xxvii. 7. xliii. 10. whence this same author, elsewhere *, very wisely scruples not to affirm, that an idolatrous prince is declared the favourite of God: as if God could not make him the rod of his anger, and the staff of his indignation against wicked nations, the instrument of his providence to chastise and punish them for their vices, which is all the import of that name, and at the same time disapprove his idolatry, his thirst of conquest and other crimes, as it is certain he did his pride and insolence. Dan. iv. 37.

As for Cyrus, if ever he was an idolater, he seems to have been no more such, when he published his edict for restoring the Jews, and rebuilding their city and temple. For herein he professes his belief, that Jehovah God of Israel, was the only true God, who had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, Ezra, i. 2. It is true, he might have been brought to entertain this opinion, by Daniel's discovering to him how this God had foretold clearly by Isaiah, his success against Babylon, through his altering the course of the great river Euphrates, an hundred years before he was born. And it may be thought an evidence he only embraced such sentiments on that event, that God himself, addressing this monarch, says to him 'I have surnamed thee though thou hast not known me.' Isaiah, xlv. 4. But even this is not sufficient

* Treatise on Toleration, chap. 12. p. 181, 182, 183. Having quoted these words which were to be spoken to five kings in the name of the Lord, 'I have given all your lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my servant;' he adds, 'Here then we have God declaring an idolatrous prince his servant and favourite.'

to convict him of having been an idolater, since the whole meaning may only be, that he was uninstructed in the Jewish dispensation, and unacquainted with the name Jehovah, by which he manifested himself to the nation of Israel*. Nevertheless, though he had been an idolater, the Jews might have called him, God's anointed, without any just blame for contradicting their law and profession. But indeed they do not. It is God himself who so names him, Isaiah, xlv. 1. 'Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, 'to Cyrus,' &c. and he might very well do so, while he was displeased with his religion, this being no more than a declaration, that he had raised him to the kingdom which he possessed, as it was a known custom to inaugurate kings in these times and places, by pouring oil upon their head; in the same manner, as afterwards he says, he had anointed Jehu, the son of Nimshi, to cut off the house of Ahab, 2 Kings, ix. 3, 7. 2 Chron. xxii. 7. whatever was his dislike of him for his vanity, and other faults.

He proceeds, 'One of their prophets was sent to 'the idolater Ninivus. Elisha allowed the idolater 'Naaman, to go into the temple of Remnan. But, 'to avoid anticipation, we know well enough, that 'men constantly run counter to their laws by their 'manners.'

But though I know Jonah was sent about 800 years before Christ, to threaten the king and people of Niniveh, with the destruction of their city, I know no shadow of evidence for this king's being called Ninivus. There is no such name even in the long tables of Assyrian kings, which Eusebius and Syn-

* Antient Universal History, chapter 5. page 391.

cellus give us, though these are looked on as forgeries by the learned; far less does it occur in any credible catalogue of them, preserved till our times. On the contrary, it is supposed by the most able critics, that the prince who then reigned over Nineveh, was called Pul. And if God extended his care to him and his subjects, in the manner which the Scripture affirms, favouring them with a mission of one of his prophets to reform them, and prevent their ruin, how ridiculous is it in our author to censure the Jews for it, 'as constantly running counter to their laws by their manners.'

Nor is the same charge against Elisha, of contradicting the law by allowing the idolater Naaman to go into the temple of Rimmon, well founded. Many, I may observe, have understood Naaman rather to ask pardon of his past attendance in the temple of Rimmon, than indulgence to his future appearance there; by consequence the prophet Elisha's answer, to contain no permission to repair thither thereafter, but only an assurance of the forgiveness of his former criminal conduct. So in particular these two eminent persons, Bochart and Calmet, expound the passage, 2 Kings, v. 18, 19. for they translate the Syrian general's request thus, which is also said to be the version of it in Luther's German Bible, with notes, printed at Weimars. 'In this thing the Lord
'pardon thy servant, that when my master went in-
'to the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he
'leaned on my hand, I bowed myself in the house
'of Rimmon. The Lord pardon thy servant in this
'thing, that I bowed myself in the house of Rimmon.'
This rendering, say they, the original will bear, with-

out any infringement of the rules of grammar; and in favour of it they add, that it is far more reasonable, to make Naaman ask pardon of idolatry which he had committed, than of idolatry which he should commit thereafter, to the grant of which his present resolution of committing it, the more aggravated that he had newly declared his sense of the evil of it, ought to have been considered by him as an unsurmountable obstacle. The prophets reply, therefore, they go on, relates to the remission of Naaman's superstitious behaviour in time past, as this was the thing asked, instead of excusing him in any future worship of the idol.

But though this explication cut off all handle and pretence for Voltaire's reproach against Elisha, I cannot think it ought to be admitted as the genuine one. Be it, that the Hebrew is capable of such a sense, and that such a sense is even preferable to that, which supposes him to demand pardon of future idolatry, with a full purpose and determination to be guilty of it, many circumstances do reclaim against it, on which account it should be rejected. For if Naaman had intended to desire forgiveness of his past idolatry, it is inconceivable he should have mentioned only his bowing in the house of Rimmon, when the king bowed, as different false divinities were worshipped in Syria, the country where he was born and resided, Judges, x. 5. and as his whole behaviour, both before and after the cure of his leprosy, shews him to have been very free from the *esprit fort*, which scorns all religious offices, as marks of a weak understanding. It is natural to suppose, he must have attended their temples, and paid ho-

mage to them univerſally by the oblation of ſacrifices, upon the uſual occaſions, and by the performance of like cuſtomary rites; and indeed that he had thus honoured a variety of Gods, may ſeem hinted in his declaration of his reſolution to reform, 'Thy ſervant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor ſacrifice unto other gods.' ver. 17. At leaſt, if by ſituation it was inconvenient to him, or by prepoſſeſſion it was diſagreeable to him to enter into other temples, he muſt have been often preſent in that of Rimmon, and have frequently bowed himſelf there, at other times than when the king was there, whoſe ſupport in his adorations required he ſhould then attend and ſtoop, ſince he could not have been always inveſted with this office about his perſon; and he muſt alſo have brought victims to his altar in their appointed ſeaſons, theſe being eſteemed indiſpenſible teſtimonies of devotion. He would therefore, if he had meant here to aſk pardon of his by-gone idolatry, have ſpoken of his bowing before idols, or at leaſt of his bowing before Rimmon in general, without throwing in the circumſtance of his waiting upon his ſovereign then, and uſing that poſture of body that he might lean upon him, which looked like an inclination to extenuate and palliate the guilt of his idol-ſervice, inſtead of diſcovering a diſpoſition to aggravate it after the manner of a ſincere penitent; and he would likewiſe, in all probability, have introduced the mention of his ſacrificing, ſeeing he ſpecifies this expreſsly as a rite which he would forbear, when he profeſſes his deſign to ceaſe from the worſhip of falſe gods in the words before quoted. Nevertheless he does not; but comprizes

all his former wickedness under the expression of his bowing in the house of Rimmon, when his master went to pay his homage there, and needed to lean upon his hand, an expression much too narrow and limited, and far too soft for his antecedent idolatry, if he was wishing its remission. For these reasons I conclude, that Naaman's words in ver. 18, relate to his future conduct, and not to his past deportment, which surely is a sense no less consonant to the Hebrew, and that the prophet's answer carries a concession of the tolerance thereafter which he desired.

But does it therefore follow, that Elifha ran counter to the law by his manners? or, as our author shews his meaning more fully in another of * his works, where he recites this history as an evidence, that God tolerated every other religion among the Jews, that he gave Naaman permission to worship the idol? By no means. Indeed, though this were the sense of Elifha's reply, forasmuch as Naaman was a Syrian returning into his own country, and asking direction about his carriage there, it would be no more a proof of the point he labours to establish, than it would be a proof of a Christian prince's tolerating the worship of Mahomet among his subjects, for one of his servants to say to a Turk making the inquiry, he might pay religious honours to that false prophet in a mosque at Constantinople. But is it really the sense, that Naaman solicits and obtains leave from the prophet to practise idolatry at home, for the time to come? Not at all. He had already declared his persuasion, that there was no God in all the earth but in Israel; and he had also vowed, that

* See his Treatise on Toleration, ch. 12. p. 177, 178.

he would thenceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice to other gods, but only to Jehovah, which was a good preparation for the pardon of his preceding idolatry: Why then would he crave licence to worship Rimmon, when he had just protested that he looked on him as no God, and promised he would never present to him any victim or oblation, which was saying in effect he would never worship him at all? Sure it is very unreasonable, to make him contradict himself in this gross manner, so speedily; nor could he, one would think, have any temptation to adore him, against the dictates of his conscience, that he was no God; for as there is no ground to suppose his prince, to whom he was most dear, would be displeased at him for his preference of Jehovah, who had freed him from so malignant and inveterate a distemper, or would molest him for it, neither does any suspicion of it seem to have entered into his breast, since before his retinue, he requested two mules burden of the earth of the land of Israel, because he would from that time make no offering to other Gods but Jehovah, and after avowing his intention in their presence, carried it home publicly into his own country, to be used for his service. He then only begged, he might be indulged without incurring the displeasure of the God of Israel; to accompany his royal master into the temple of Rimmon, according to the duty of his civil station, and in fulfilment of it to bow* down when he bowed, as

* The verb translated 'to bow down,' is often used to denote the posture of civil homage, as well as of religious worship, Gen. xxiii, 7, xxxiii. 3. xliii. 6,

it behoved him to lean † upon him in stooping and rising up.

Which confirms this interpretation, every word Naaman uses, appears upon it proper and pertinent, and no term is superfluous; for hereby, we see why he mentions the circumstance of his master's entrance into the temple of Rimmon; because namely, for the future the execution of his office about him would be the sole end of his appearance there:—why he speaks only of bowing the knee; because thereafter he was to take no part in the worship of that imaginary divinity, by offering sacrifice, but merely to practise genuflexion, which was needful to assist the king more conveniently.—And finally, why he is silent about every other temple than Rimmon's; because his sovereign did not frequent any besides this, it being, if I may use the expression, as it were the cathedral of Damascus, where * Rimmon the great deity of Syria was served, with the most magnificent and showy forms.

† A like auxiliary or assistant officer in walking, seems to be mentioned in the court of Joram king of Israel, 2 Kings, vii. 2.

• There is only mention of the name and temple of this idol here. Some have explained the word to signify *high*, the more that Stephanus quotes Philo saying, Παμὰ γὰρ τοῦ ὑψους, in vocab. Λαοδικεία; and have supposed the sun was so denominated, from his elevated station in heaven, and extensive empire. Compare Calmet on the place, and Selden, De Dis Syris Syntagma, 2. cap. 10. I shall however lay before the reader a conjecture, many years ago communicated to me by a learned foreigner, and which I see hath been since that time proposed, by the authors of the Acta Eruditorum Lipsiæ, 1742, p. 536. It is this, that it was the same with the Jupiter Cassius of the Greeks. For as קמון in Hebrew signifies, a pomegranate, Exod. xxviii. 34. Num. xx. 5. Hag. ii. 19. &c. So Jupiter Cassius's statue in the temples on mount Cassi-

Such therefore was the matter, about which he was solicitous, and with respect to it, Elifha granted him his † freedom, or agreed that it should not be imputed to him as a sin : in which I pray, what was

us, and in Pelusium, that were consecrated to him, had a pomegranate in its hand for some mystical reason. So Achilles Tatius lib. 2. Προβέβληται δὲ τὴν χεῖρα, καὶ χεῖροισιν ἐπ' αὐτῇ· τῆς δὲ τοιαύτης ὁ λόγος ὁ μουσικός. In like manner, had Juno's statue near the ruins of Mycenae, as Pausanias Corinth. cap. 17. tells us, though he declines telling the import of the pomegranate, as what was to be buried in silence.

† That Elifha's reply 'Go in peace,' signifies his acquiescence in his petition, or his consent unto it, cannot be doubted I think, whatever some have said. if we compare the use of the phrase, Exod. iv. 18. Judg. xviii. 6. 1 Sam. i. 17. 2 Sam. xv. 9. Mark, v. 34. Luke, vii. 50.—Father Houbigant reasons largely in his notes upon the place, against them who interpret Naaman's demand to have a retrospect to his past idolatry ; because, says he, pardon of this should have been asked of Jehovah, whom he now knew, not of Elifha his servant, though he might with propriety inquire at him, whether the use of such a posture in the connection he declared, would be innocent or criminal. Then he adds, which seems a reflexion better founded, because if he had meant to solicit pardon of false offences, he would have made express mention of that which was most culpable in his behaviour, his sacrificing to Rimmon, or shewing the like mark of religious respect to the idol, not merely his supporting the king in the temple, and his bowing there when he bowed, which none can consider as the chief instance of his iniquity. And he also gives the same interpretation of Naaman's request as above, with which view he renders לָדָבֵר הַזֶּה, *leddaber bazzeh*, in the beginning of ver. 18. 'For this cause, or 'this thing, Jehovah pardon, &c.' That is, according to him, 'Forasmuch as I declare, I will not sacrifice but unto Jehovah, let not 'my bowing down in attendance on my duty to my prince, subject 'me to any punishment.' And in this manner, I observe our translators themselves have turned a like expression, Joshua, ix. 9. 'From 'a very far country are thy servants come, because of the name of 'the Lord thy God, יְהוָה לְשֵׁם יְהוָה *Le Shem Jehovah*, as they might

there amiss or contrary to the law of Moses? This was not to encourage hypocrisy in him, or his making a shew of veneration and respect for the idol amidst inward contempt thereof, to deceive the world. For how could bowing in the temple, so restrained in its time and occasion, ever be understood by the Syrians as a token and mark of his honour for Rimmon, amidst his uniform forbearance to offer sacrifice to him, and after a public profession that he never would present such oblation, there being no God in all the earth but in Israel? public I call it, because all the Syrians heard it who accompanied him, and who in all likelihood were not few, considering Naraman's rank and dignity, together with the vanity and affectation of pomp in eastern grandees; nor can it be thought they would be wanting to make it

have done also instead of *for*, Levit. xix. 28. Num. vi. 7. Job, xxx. 25. and *from*, Ezra, iii. 13.

Monsieur Rocques also, pastor at Basil in Switzerland, to omit Werenfels and others, in his Discours Historiques, Critiques, Theologiques, &c. on the most memorable events of the Old Testament, being a continuation of Monsieur Saurin's work, hath largely written upon the same side, to whom I have been obliged upon this article.—Nor can it be improper to observe, as it is at once an argument both of the strength of his arguments, and of the candour of the authors of a foreign Literary Journal, that after they had attacked his hypothesis, upon a less perfect and full explication of his reasons for it, (being in the same sentiments with Bochart) they upon his addressing a letter to them, with a more copious defence and vindication of it, even adopted it in opposition to their former opinion, and were not ashamed to own, that they thought Bochart himself would have done so, upon such superior evidence.—Whoever would become acquainted with his reasonings in support of it, and his answers to objections, may look into Biblioth. Raisonnée, Tom. xv. p. 439. and xvii. 105.

known being under no prohibition, more than to declare the miracle which gave rise to it.

As little was it to promote the seduction of others to idolatry; for how could Naaman's bowing there, qualified as it was, be a snare to any of the Syrians to worship Rimmon, when he had acquainted them by his own mouth with his real unbelief in him, having renounced aloud all veneration for any Gods but Jehovah, the God of Israel, upon an occasion whence the news of this change would soon spread abroad, and when his notorious omission of bringing any sacrifices to another god, while he offered them to Jehovah upon a new altar, publicly erected with materials from the land of Israel, would from time to time proclaim it to his countrymen.—Voltaire then had no just cause to say, the prophet allowed Naaman to go into the temple of Rimmon, to worship there, nor to draw such inferences from the history, as he does, of God's tolerating idolatry among the Jews.

S E C T I O N V.

Of his representing the Jews to relate, that they had the express order of God to slay seven or eight small nations, sparing none but the little girls, in the thirty-sixth chapter of his *Philosophy of History*, as also in his *Treatise on Toleration*.

I NOW pass over to the thirty-sixth chapter of his *Philosophy of History*. Here he makes 'the Jews relate' in their holy books, that they had the express

‘ order of God, when they were fugitives from Egypt, to immolate seven or eight small nations whom they did not know, to slay without mercy all the women, all the old men, and even the children at the breast, reserving none but the little girls.’ And he had expressed himself very much to the same purpose before, in his Treatise on Toleration chap. 12. ‘ It is certain that the Jews were greatly in want of women, since we find them almost always commanded, when they conquered any town or village, to the right or left of the lake Asphaltes, to put all the inhabitants to the sword, excepting only the young women who were of an age to know man.’

But no more may we rely upon his account in this, than in other articles. For according to Scripture, the Jews had no such general direction to save the little girls among the nations of Canaan, as he speaks of in the former passage, or the young women that were marriageable, as he describes them in the latter place.—It is true, in the war with the Midianites, God gave them a charge to preserve alive all the women that had not known man, while they slew the rest. But then this discrimination in the treatment of their females, by which the maids were to be spared, was not enjoined for the sake of supplying some great want of women, under which they laboured, as he sets forth, for such defect would have led to save the sex more promiscuously; but because the other women among the Midianites had seduced the children of Israel, by the advice of Balaam, into whoredom and idolatry. Thus we read,

† Page 161. Note.

it was upon this account God's pleasure, declared to them by his servant Moses, that they should be universally cut off, Num. xxxi. 15. &c. 'Moses said unto them,—Behold these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him; but all the women-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.'

Besides, the Midianites were not one of the nations of Canaan; by consequence, they were not one of these seven or eight small nations, which our author appears to intend, when he says, the Jews relate they had the express order of God to immolate so many, with the single exception of the little girls, as we have seen above. For this he himself should be allowed to be a sufficient voucher, since he tells us, 'Midian was not *included in the land of promise. It is a little canton of Idumaea, in Arabia Petraea, beginning to the northward of the torrent of Arnon, and ending at the torrent of Zered, in the midst of rocks, on the eastern border of the lake Asphaltites.' But if any require original evidence, that Midian was a distinct country from the land of Canaan, they may be satisfied about it by looking into Judges, vi. 4. vii. 12, 24, 25. Exod. iii. 1. Deut.

* Treatise on Toleration, chap. 12. p. 166. I do not however think this description of the land of Midian altogether just, for it was a different country from the Edom or Idumaea of Scripture, and lay to the south, not the north of the torrent of Arnon.

i. 2. Exod. iii. 12, 18. v. 3. 1 Kings, xi. 18. From comparing these places together, it will appear it lay even to the south of Moab, and to the west, perhaps also the south of Edom, and stretched unto mount Horeb, which was no more than three days journey from the frontier of Egypt, while again this mount was eleven days journey from Kadesh-barnea, a town mentioned as the southern border or termination of the promised land, Num. xxxiv. 4. Josh. xv. 3; as indeed the spies were sent thence to examine it, and bring a report of its nature and state, Num. xxxii. 8. Joshua, xiv. 7.

Why then did Mr. Voltaire take this strange licence of affirming, that the Jews according to their sacred books, were commanded by God to preserve the little girls of seven or eight small nations, which they were otherwise to destroy without mercy, that they might be furnished for population, amidst their own great loss of the female species, by the fatigues and distresses of the wilderness, when the order to reserve the damsels, and kill all the women that had known man, was only given in the case of the Midianites, who were not among the nations of Canaan, and given for a very different reason from that which he assigned? and is it not still more inexcusable in him, to write as if they were to deal thus by every town or village to the right or left of the lake Asphaltés, that is, the Dead sea, when we find them expressly forbidden to use any hostilities against the children of Esau and Moab, or to disturb them in their possessions, Deut. ii. 1—9. who were situated immediately on the right, that is, on the east side of the lake Asphaltés, or as it is commonly called, the Dead sea?

But further, is it true that they were commanded to kill every living male and female, young and old, at all events, even in the nations of Canaan, as he hath said by their own history they were, with exception only of the little girls, an exception for which it hath been already observed there was no ground? in this way I confess many, under whose authority he may shelter himself, have explained the divine direction to the Israelites. Nor do I reject their sense, from any apprehension of the impossibility of defending the justice and wisdom of that order; for might not Jehovah, the bestower and therefore the sovereign of life, with equal righteousness cut off these sinful nations and their posterity, by the intervention of human agents, as destroy them by pestilence, famine, inundation, fire from heaven, or any similar judgment? and might it not seem expedient to God, to prefer exterminating the Canaanites, among whom the most cruel idolatries, and the most abominable vices were come to a great length, by the sword of the Jews; to their excision by another method? thus, at the same time, that there would be a manifestation of his displeasure against them for their heinous crimes, there would also be a visible triumph of his own pure and unrivalled worship as the true God, (which he had lately established among this people who were the ministers of his providence, with some very astonishing marks of his supreme and uncontrollable dominion,) over the wicked and corrupt forms of religion to which they were enslaved, that suffered, in the execution done upon them, his wrath and vengeance. And a triumph which, useful as the same might be to inspire an abhorrence of idola-

try, it was likely, would not be soon effaced, either from the minds of the neighbouring nations, or of the conquerors themselves.

Nevertheless, though I do not find fault with the interpretation which makes God enjoin the Jews to destroy the nations of Canaan absolutely without regard to their future behaviour from any opinion of its irreconcilableness with the divine perfections, I think another and milder explication is rather to be chosen. For it seems to me, that God directs them to proclaim peace to every city, whether more near or more remote, and to admit the inhabitants upon their acceptance of the conditions which they should offer to them to live under tribute, and that he only commands them to proceed to extremities upon their refusal of their terms. But here again they were, according to his regulations, to make a difference. For where cities were more distant, they were, in the case of obstinacy, to destroy none but all the males with the edge of the sword, leaving the women and the little ones alive: but when cities were more near, as were these of the nations of Canaan, they were, in the like case of inflexibleness, to cut off every thing that breathed, without limitation or restriction. The words upon which I build this account of the matter, it will be necessary to recite. They stand thus in Deuteronomy, xx. 10—18. ‘ When
 ‘ thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it,
 ‘ then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it
 ‘ make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee,
 ‘ then it shall be, that all the people that are found
 ‘ therein, shall be tributaries unto thee, and they
 ‘ shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with-

' thee, but will make war against thee, then thou
 ' shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God hath
 ' delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every
 ' male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the
 ' women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all
 ' that is in the city, even all thereof shalt thou take
 ' unto thyself: and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine
 ' enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.
 ' Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities, which are
 ' very far off from thee, which are not of the cities
 ' of these nations. But of the cities of these
 ' people, which the Lord thy God doth give for
 ' an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that
 ' breatheth: but thou shalt utterly destroy them,
 ' namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Ca-
 ' naanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the
 ' Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath command-
 ' ed thee: that they teach you not to do after all
 ' their abominations, which they have done unto
 ' their gods, so should you sin against the Lord
 ' your God.' And as there is some controversy
 about their meaning, the reasons why I expound
 them as above, instead of confining the charge about
 an offer of peace, and about the mercy or severity
 which should be exercised upon agreement to it, or
 rejection of it, to the cities which were very far
 off, and excluding, by consequence, the nations of
 Canaan from any interest or share in it, may be briefly
 declared as follows. Concerning the force of them
 every one must judge for himself.

First, where the order about the excision of the
 nations of Canaan runs in the strongest terms, the
 reason given for it is, ' That they might not turn

‘ them away from worshipping Jehovah to serve other gods.’ Exod. xxiii. 33. Deut. vii. 2—4. Or, as it is, Deut. xx. 18. ‘ That they might not teach them to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods.’ If therefore, they renounced their idolatry, and its attendant wickednesses, the reason for destroying them ceased. By consequence, on this change of practice, the command to cut them off, which proceeded upon the supposition of their adherence to their hateful superstition, did not oblige.

Secondly, it is expressly said in the book of Joshua, xi. 19, 20. ‘ There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle; for it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them as the Lord commanded Moses.’ And does not this plainly imply, that if they had not been so obstinate as to make war upon the Israelites, and to appear in arms against them, but had submitted to their proposals, instead of being put to death, they would have been spared, in a consistency with the divine precept and ordinance about their excision; as indeed whoever acted such a part were?—To make the meaning, not that the Israelites would have been obliged, in this case of compliance with their overtures, to save them alive, but only that then their compassion and pity would have wrought so strongly, as to have disabled them from executing God’s order about their extirpation, though peremptory

and irrespective to any alteration of manners, does not answer the natural import of the expressions.

Thirdly, It is not conceivable how the covenant of the elders, and Joshua, and the princes of the congregation, with the ambassadors of the Gibeonites, to spare them who were a part of the Hivites, (one of the seven nations) even after it was ratified by oath, should have been at all binding upon them, had they been laid under a divine prohibition to shew favour and indulgence, in regard to life, to such of these nations as should submit; and it is the less so, as there had been the use of fraud or trick on their part, in order to procure the stipulations they wished, since they persuaded the rulers of Israel, that they dwelt in countries very far off, when yet they were in the midst of them. For how absurd, I pray, to imagine we can be loosed from the authority and force of a divine statute by any promise or oath, especially when we have been drawn into it by their lying and falsehood, whose interest and safety are thereby promoted, their assertion having weighed so much with us as to determine us to believe a thing to be fact which was not, but which unless we had looked upon as true, would have wholly prevented our engagement? Indeed, upon what principles can the validity of the transaction be maintained, but upon such as are of the most dangerous nature? I mean that the interposition of a promise or oath, although men have been ensnared into it by fallacy and deceit, will make that to be duty which God hath forbidden, or that to be sinful which he hath commanded. Nevertheless, we find Joshua and all the princes thought this covenant which they

had made with the Gibeonites binding. Though the children of Israel murmured after the detection of the artifice and stratagem, all the princes said unto all the congregation, Joshua, ix. 19. 'We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them. This will we do to them; we will even let them live lest wrath be upon us.' Wherefore they preserved them; only made their condition harder than it would have been, except for their falsehood. Nay, God himself accounted the covenant so sacred, that he sent a famine of three years continuance upon the land in the days of David, because Saul and his house had slain the descendants of these Gibeonites with whom it was made, in opposition to the tenor thereof, 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 3. —Is their having recourse to the pretence of distant situation urged as an argument that the Israelites would not spare any whom they knew to belong to the seven nations of Canaan? I answer, It only proves that such an opinion prevailed among them, but not that the Israelites were bound by a divine command to act in that manner. Again, are the men of Israel's words to them, when they said, 'Make ye a league with us,' insisted on as a demonstration that themselves were sensible they could not spare them, if they were in the number of the Canaanites: forasmuch as they run thus, 'Peradventure ye dwell among us, and how shall we make a league with you.' Joshua, ix. 7. I reply, These words may very well be understood to denote no more than this, that they could not make a *pactum sociale* with them, that is, receive them as allies and friends, or admit them to a league of equal

right and privilege, such as one state enters into with another, which they might suppose to be their desire and request; and therefore should not be explained to signify, that they could not suffer them to live in a state of tribute, upon their submission to their terms, if they dwelt at hand.—To alledge that God confirmed this oath by a particular revelation, lest the violation of it, as an oath was universally esteemed a sacred and inviolable bond, should have given the nations around a disadvantageous opinion of Israel and their God, which Mr. Barbeyrac hath done to account for the regard paid to it, when there is a total silence about such interposition from heaven in the history, though upon it alone could that promise, which was null from the beginning, become obligatory, seems to be making too bold, and taking too great freedom with the Sacred Books. Nor is the hypothesis at all suited to inspire that piety and veneration for the Deity, which it is professedly intended to advance. For, however, the parties that were gainers might be pleased that the rigour and severity of the command to exterminate them was dispensed with, in what a strange light does it represent God to act, while it introduces him giving his sanction to a covenant, which was entered into in violation of his own order, through neglect of due inquiry on the one side, and brought about on the other part by the most sedate and deliberate prevarication? There must then have been room left by the divine ordinance, for suffering such of the seven nations, as consented to the conditions proposed by the Israelites, to live under tribute, forasmuch as, on account of this treaty, it was so solemnly pronounced

unlawful to cut off the Gibeonites who belonged to one of them.

But finally, the same thing may be argued from the lenity promised without any divine licence or authority, and afterward exercised toward Rahab, Joshua, iii. 12, 13, 14. and vi. 22, 23. also from the forbearance practised toward the inhabitants of Gezer, Josh. vi, 10. and toward the family in Bethel, Judg. i. 25. together with others, whose posterity we read of in the land in Solomon's, and even in our Saviour's time, 1 Kings, ix. 20, 21. Matth. viii. 28. while yet it is said, Joshua failed not to do every thing which God had commanded in relation to this conquest. For with what truth could this have been affirmed, had so many of these Canaanites been spared, when they were required to be cut off absolutely, and without any restriction or reserve?

For these reasons I prefer that interpretation which I have given. If I am right in it, Mr. Voltaire ought not to have said, that the Jews relate in their sacred books, they had the express order of God to slay these nations of Canaan without mercy, as he hath done, with exception of a special privilege to the little girls, which is wholly fictitious. Even where they may not convince, it should be owned, it would have been more fair and candid in him to have taken notice, that his sense of the order was disputed, considering how many eminent persons *, both Jews

* Among the Jews, I mention Maimonides, Samson Micosi, Moses de Kotzri, and Ben Nachman; among the Christians, Junius, Cunaeus de Republ. Hebr. Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, 2. 13. 4. Placcette Traité du Serment, 2. 9. Selden de Jure Naturae et Gentium, 5. 12. and 6. 13. 14. To whom I only add Le Clerc, whose autho-

and Christians, have rejected it, and adopted the same explication which I have endeavoured to establish.

SECTION VI.

Of his asserting in different treatises, that the Jewish law required human sacrifices.

IN the next page of the Philosophy of History, our author observes, ‘ The * Jews have a law, wheréby ‘ they are expressly ordered to spare no thing, nor ‘ any man devoted to the Lord, “ He cannot be “ bought off, he must die,” according to the law ‘ of Leviticus, chap. xxvii.’ And then he goes on to tell us, as we will see in the next section, that one of their judges, and one of their priests, offered each a human sacrifice by virtue of this law. In like manner, but more plainly, he writes in his Philosophical † Dictionary, ‘ It was expressly enjoined in the ‘ Jewish law, to sacrifice all who had been devoted ‘ to the Lord. No man shall be redeemed, but shall ‘ be put to death without remission:’ The Vulgate has it, ‘ Non redimetur, sed morte morietur.’ Levit. xxvii. 29. And then, having mentioned that Samuel hewed Agag in pieces in consequence of this law, he subjoins, ‘ Here is an evident proof of human sacrifices.’ To the same purpose very much, he also

rity may seem the greater, that having, in his Commentary on the Pentateuch, contended for the other sense, he, in his Notes on the book of Joshua, discards it, and justifies this which I have chosen.

* Page 172.

† Article Jephtha, or Human Sacrifices, p. 226. 227.

explains the law, in his Dialogues and Essays Literary and Philosophical. But I forbear at present reciting the passage, as I will have occasion to produce it soon in a note. †

But is there not here also misrepresentation? to evince this, let us examine Mr. Voltaire's interpretation of the statute in Leviticus, reserving his accounts of the human sacrifices, which he says were offered according to it, till afterwards,

These interpretations of the law, which make it authorize human sacrifices, or even the destruction of the lives of children and slaves at pleasure, refuted.

Now to affirm as he does, that it required the oblation of a man, as a sacrifice upon God's altar, whenever he was devoted by another, appears extremely absurd and unreasonable. Jehovah, the God of Israel, hath in this same code of laws, most expressly forbidden his people, to do unto him according to the customs of the Canaanites, which he hated, and for which he expelled them, in presenting human victims to their idols. Deut. xii. 29—31. 'When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land, take heed to thyself, that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed before thee, and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the

† See Note, page 141.

‘ Lord thy God. For every abomination to the Lord
 ‘ which he hateth, have they done unto their gods,
 ‘ for even their sons and their daughters they have
 ‘ burnt in the fire to their gods.’ And suitably to this
 earnest prohibition he uses, by his prophet * *Isaiah*,
 sacrificing a man to him, as a proverbial expression
 for doing a thing most odious and offensive to him,
 ‘ He’ saith God, ‘ that killeth an ox,’ viz. as a sacri-
 fice to me, while he chuseth his own evil ways, and
 delighteth in his abominations, ‘ is as if he slew a
 ‘ man,’ and offered him upon mine altar: *lxvi. 3.*
 Nevertheless, according to our author, he in this
 passage of *Leviticus* directs them to vow, and present
 these very sacrifices which he so peremptorily dis-
 charges, and so strongly declares his abhorrence of;
 at least, he leaves them at their freedom and liberty
 to devote such to him, and in pursuance of the de-
 votement enjoins them to offer them. But what hu-
 mane lawgiver ever so contradicted himself? How
 unjust to impute such an opposition of ordinances, as
 this gloss supposes, unto God? especially when there
 is so little pretence for it, there not being one syllable
 about sacrificing in the requirement; for it only runs,
 ‘ He who is devoted of men, shall surely be put to
 ‘ death;’ and there not being one clear or incon-
 testible example of the oblation of a human sacrifice
 among the Jews, through their whole history, as
 plain as this practice appears, in the annals of the

• That the phrase in *Isaiah* is thus to be expounded, and not to
 be understood of murder in general, is plain from this consideration,
 that killing a man here stands in conjunction with other religious cere-
 monies which God detested, the oblation of a dog, and of swine’s
 blood, &c.

Gentile nations. I pass other arguments against the same sense, as its making it lawful, nay incumbent on a person, to lay upon God's altar, the most innocent and useful of all his brethren, whenever he had been malicious or wanton enough to utter a vow about it, and the like; for these will be touched on immediately, to confute a similar hypothesis. Nor can it be requisite to dwell upon them here; the considerations already mentioned, by themselves seem sufficient to shew the meaning, put upon the statute by our author, to be altogether groundless. Accordingly, it hath not been proposed by any of the Scripture critics*, nor indeed by any writer so far as I know, if we except the enemies of revelation, who have

* I once thought, I ought to have excepted the learned Capell here, because in his Dissertation on Jephtha's vow, he represents the notion of the heathens, that the more heavy displeasure of their gods could not be averted, but by human sacrifices, to have been derived from this ordinance, and uses some expressions, which look as if he had interpreted it of offering men on God's altar. But on a more careful examination, I find he espouses not this but the next scheme. For having turned Jephtha's vow thus, 'Whatever cometh out of my house shall be the Lord's, (sacred to him by a curse,) and I will offer it for a burnt offering,' if it be fit for it; and having contended he put his daughter to death, in pursuance of his devotement according to this very statute, he adds, 'It is not necessary to maintain, that she was offered on God's altar for an holocaust or burnt offering. It is enough if she was put to death, according to the law of the Hherem or curse. Such a curse his vow was, by which, when any living creatures were dedicated, they were offered in sacrifice, if fit for the altar, as clean beasts, sheep, oxen, goats, &c. If unclean beasts, as horses, camels, &c. they were only killed. In the same manner were human persons dealt with, whom the law orders *to be put to death, not to be offered in sacrifice.*' Again, 'By the law in Leviticus xxvii. it behoved that Jephtha's daughter should die, not that she should be offered in sacri-

laid hold upon the passage, to declaim against the Mosaic law, as appointing human sacrifices.

It is probable however, I may be here reminded, that whether the law in Leviticus commanded human sacrifices or not, is a mere † logomachy, or fight about words; if it did not authorize the oblation of men in sacrifice, it certainly prescribed the destruction of their lives by violence, upon the interposition of a vow to that purpose; this is the obvious and natural construction of the statute, and as such hath been contended for, by persons of distinguished literature and acuteness.

In answer, I own this other exposition hath had some very eminent advocates, (though not in all the latitude which the objector gives it, while he supposes the statute authorized to devote, and destroy the lives of all persons indiscriminately,) in particular, the celebrated Lewis Capell, in his *Dissertation* quoted in the former note, hath so interpreted it. He imagines that God here provided, that when a man had devoted any person to him, over whom he had power or right of life and death, as a master over his slave,

‘fice.’ See the *Dissert.* sect. 26. and 27. in vol. ii. of *Sacred Criticks*, on *Judges*, chap. ii.

† Says Mr. Voltaire, in his *Dialogues and Essays Literary and Philosophical*, and there, *Essay of the Jews*, p. 58. ‘It hath long been a matter of dispute among the learned, whether the Jews offered human sacrifices to the Deity, like other nations; but this is merely a controversy about words. Those it is true, whom they devoted to death, were not butchered upon the altar with all the parade of religious rites. But they were nevertheless sacrificed, without its being lawful to spare so much as a single person. In the twenty-ninth chapter of Leviticus, ver. 27. the Mosaic law expressly forbids to ransom those, whom they had devoted to destruction.’

or a parent over his child, he should put him to death; yet without approving this conduct: just as when a man would not cohabit any longer with his wife, because she had become disagreeable for some matter of uncleanness; he directed to give her a bill or writing of divorcement, and to send her away with it out of his house, but herein rather permitted a wanton separation on account of the hardness of their hearts, than approved it.—That still parents and masters were liable to check and controul, in this exercise of their authority and jurisdiction, by the priests, who he thinks were constituted final and ultimate judges in all cases of *bherem* or curse; because it is said, Numb. xviii. 14. ‘Every thing devoted in *Israel, shall be the priests.’ So, says he, all abuses of the liberty granted by this statute would be remedied, and the execution of unreasonable vows, about the destruction of the lives of others, would be prevented;—children and slaves would, from the ordinance, have an additional motive to treat their parents and masters with most profound reverence, afraid lest through an opposite carriage, they should irritate and provoke them to devote them to death; and at the same time, parents and masters would be rendered more cautious of pronouncing rash and passi-

* The term here is the same as in the text under controversy, every *bherem* or every thing accursed, devoted. See his Dissert. sect. 8. and as to the sequel, see sect. 9. where he observes, God has sometimes ratified the rash curses of parents, sending calamities upon them according to their tenor, in righteous punishment thereof, that he might put them on their guard against such; and thence infers, God might enact this statute to prevent cruelty, even as these statutes about not seething a kid in its mother’s milk, and not taking a bird with its young.

onate curses against the lives of their children and slaves, as they would be subjected, unless the priest forbid and dissolved the obligation of the vow, to lose all that comfort and advantage they might have received, from the longer continuance of their lives. Thus that very able and learned writer; and I know he was herein followed by the famous Mr. Albert Schultens of Leyden, when he treated this subject in his lectures on the Jewish Antiquities, which no doubt, with all who are acquainted with his eminent reputation, must add greater weight to that account of the statute.

But with all due deference to these great names, I must also reject it as inadmissible, since it neither proceeds upon true principles, nor proposes a sense consistent with other rules of the Mosaic law, and agreeable to the appeal which God makes, concerning the transcendent justice and equity of the whole, Deut. iv. 7. 8. For it does not appear, that parents and masters had such power over the lives of their children and slaves by that law, as is here pretended. Be it, that a parent had a right by it, to devote his son to the service of God about the tabernacle or temple all his days, (though there is less force in the instance of Samuel to prove this, because he was himself a Levite,) how can it ever be thought, he had a right according to it, to vow away his life at his pleasure, when we see, it did not permit his punishing him with death, even on the commission of gross crimes, till there was a formal conviction of him before the magistrates, within whose district they were done, and their concurrence to such treatment, Deut. xiii. 6. xvii. 7. xxi. 18? and again, be it, that a master could

devote with validity a Gentile slave, whom he had bought with his money, Levit. xxv. 44. &c. unto attendance about the sanctuary through life, (for as to a Hebrew slave, it is evident, his title to dispose of him could only extend to the seventh year of his bondage, or, upon his refusal of his liberty then, to the accomplishment of the jubilee, Exod. xxi. 2. &c. Levit. xxv. 39.) how can it ever be imagined, that he had power to subject him to a necessity of dying by a vow, when he was required to abstain, even from smiting out an eye or a tooth, under the penalty of giving him his dismissal and release? yet it might have been done through a sudden fally and transport of passion, and not by cool contrivance and sedate premeditation, see Exod. xx. 20—27. Accordingly, the Jewish masters, as * Selden assures us, agree that parents and masters had not the power of life and death over their children and servants.

* Selden, *De Jure Naturae et Gentium*, lib. 4. cap. 9. Maimonides in particular observes, masters could not devote Hebrew slaves through life, only Heathen ones, *Iad Chazakah*, part 3. lib. 6. cap. 4. entitled, *Estimationes et Devota*; whence it follows, they could not take away their life. And in *Mishna*, v. 212. it is said, ‘A man may devote (a part) out of his flock and herd, out of his men and maid-servants that are Canaanites, and out of the field of his possession.’ ‘But if a Jew were to devote his son or daughter, man or maid-servant that were Hebrews, the devoting would be void, because no man can devote what is not his own, or what he has not the absolute disposal of the life of.’ R. Manassch Ben Israel moreover, in his *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, where he is refuting the story that the Jews killed some Christian, that they might leaven their dough with his blood about the time of the passover, after speaking of the prohibition to kill, takes notice of the law, Exod. xxi. 20. and reasons excellently to our purpose thus, ‘The text’ says he, ‘speaks of a Gentile slave, for only of persons of

Farther, whereas God after the flood had made murder capital, saying, ' Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed,' Gen. ix. 5. and by Moses had repeated the awful sanction, to deter from the practice of so enormous wickedness, ' Whoso killeth any person, shall be put to death; ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall be surely put to death,' Numb. xxxv. 30, 31. How vain all these measures, and how ineffectual to prevent it, if a person by a *cherem* or curse and devotement against a child or servant, who had incurred his displeasure however undeservedly, could render it innocent to take away his life, and evade every penalty. What indeed would such an establishment have been, as these we oppose make the law in Leviticus, but giving a licence to parents and masters to destroy by a vow any under them, whom they wished cut off, tho' most harmless, yea most useful, without hazard of punishment for it.—It is said indeed, the priests

' this original can it be said, that they are the money of a Jew, who is their master, as Abenezra observes on the place; God orders, if he die under his hand, the master be put to death, because it is to be presumed, he intended to kill him, (although if he lived a day or two, the master was free, upon the presumption he had no design to kill else he would have done it on the spot;) how then can it be lawful' concludes he, ' to kill a stranger.' See this paragraph quoted in the account of the piece, Bibl. Raïson. tom. 12. p. 182. and compare Phœnix, article 24. vol. 2. I only subjoin, for obviating any impressions by the note from Capell, about God's sometimes executing the passionate curses of a parent or master, that suppose he had done so as often as hath been imagined, this is very different from his obliging men by a public law to proceed in their treatment of others, according to them, even unto blood.

could prohibit the fulfilment of the vow, where it was unreasonable: but, to omit that it is supposable their consent might be procured to the most unjust and tyrannical effusion of blood, by various artifices, all this about the right of the priests to annul a vow for the destruction of human life, is pure invention, neither founded in Scripture, (for the passage recited from Numbers to prove it only declares the priests property or interest, in such devoted things as are there enumerated, whence he might use them for his sustenance and comfort,) nor countenanced by any commentaries of the Jewish doctors upon it, nor supported by any example of such interposition, in the history of the nation.

Finally, as to the statute's having a tendency, according to the interpretation which I oppose, to secure greater respect from children and slaves, I would ask, did not parents and masters on their part also need some restraint from unkind and inhumane behaviour toward them, instead of being left free to take away their lives after a vow, without becoming obnoxious to suffer for it? and as to its being a mean of preventing rash and passionate vows, or curses rather, to be assured, that after they were pronounced, there was no resiling; it behoved the unhappy person who was the subject thereof, to lose his life, however reluctant and averse his devoter might be to deprive him of it, in more calm and sober hours; it is granted, it might operate this way, where was any dissuasive from natural affection or accidental tenderness, or prospect of secular advantage; but what bloody work would the statute as explained open a wide door unto, wherever any injury real or

imaginary was received, and any displeasure kindled on account thereof, and no such friendly or interested restraints against excision? Besides, as one observes, it was a strange way of deterring men from the wickedness of rash curses, to decree by a solemn and public law, that the treatment of the innocent object thereof should be answerable unto them; the proper method to hinder and discourage such passionate vows of deadly import would have been, to have declared them null, and to have inflicted some fine or punishment upon the maker thereof, instead of dooming the guiltless person against whom they were levelled, to perish.

May I not now then upon the whole infer, that no more is this than the former, the true sense of the law, ‘ That whatever child or slave belonging to him ‘ a man shall devote, shall surely be put to death?’ far less then can the intention be, Whatever man, without restriction and limitation, any shall devote or curse, shall be put to death; which yet would be its scope, according to such commentators, unless the words ‘ which is his,’ are repeated from the former verse. For such a statute would have been still more unreasonable, as it would have placed every man, however independent on another, and exempt from his jurisdiction in other matters, at his mercy as to life or death, and would have afforded an easy opportunity to any person, to rid himself of another, even the most excellent, who stood in the way of the accomplishment of his schemes, under cover of piety, without incurring any evil for it. Who therefore can entertain the opinion, that such can be the meaning of the ordinance in a body of laws, where

the lives of others are so strictly guarded, and so solicitously preserved from unjust violence?

In vain surely is it pretended, because God here suffered a husband to put away his wife, who was become offensive in his eyes, upon giving her a bill of separation, in consideration of the hardness of the hearts of the Jewish people, he may also have enacted such a law as Capell and his followers will have this to be, for the same reason; for while it is obvious, that by such indulgence in the case of their wives, (which yet was not granted, without a caveat against the precipitate use of it on sudden quarrels, by declaring they should be free to marry other men, and could never be readmitted to the houses and beds of their former husbands, though their affection and desire should return,) greater evils and inconveniences might be prevented, what greater mischief could be avoided by this statute, than that which, upon their interpretation, it introduced? Even the destruction of the devoted, without any possibility of redemption.

The connection in which this law stands opened; and the merit of several interpretations which take away all pretence for saying that it authorizes human sacrifices, or the arbitrary destruction of the lives of men, examined.

WHAT then shall we say is the true design of the statute? Perhaps we will derive some assistance toward the discovery of it from the connection. Let us therefore consider how it is introduced.

In the former part of this chapter, rules are laid down concerning those things which were matter of a *neder* נדר that is, of a bare or simple vow, shewing on what conditions, and at what prices things consecrated to the Lord by it, in consequence of a man's full power over them, and right in them, might be recovered for his own use and service.—Then Moses proceeds to speak of things which were matter of a *hberem* חבֵרֶם or curse, that is, which were devoted to the Lord by any person, with an imprecation, or wish of mischief to himself, if he did not fulfill the engagement; as we call them sometimes in our translation, 'which were accursed to the Lord.' And he says, by way of exception from these things that were redeemable, because the subject only of a *neder* or simple vow, 'Notwithstanding, no devoted thing ' which a man shall devote to the Lord, of all that ' he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field ' of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every ' devoted thing is most holy to the Lord.' * Verse 28.

* This expression, 'Holy to the Lord,' does not always imply a sacrifice, wherefore it is vain to argue from it, that the man so devoted was to be sacrificed. A field could not be sacrificed. No more could a beast which was of the unclean kind; or which, though it was of the clean kind, laboured under any defect, disease, or blemish; while yet if such was the subject of a *hberem*, it was irredeemable, so that no other could be bought with its price, and substituted in its room on God's altar. Nevertheless, it is decreed both field and beast, as well as man, so devoted, should be holy to the Lord. Why then should any infer from the phrase, that a man was to be sacrificed?—Add to this, from a beast's being made a burnt offering, a priest could receive no benefit; for no part would be saved from the altar for sustenance to him and his household. With what propriety then could it be ordained, 'Every devoted thing in Israel shall be the priests.' Num.

Neither field, nor beast, nor man so devoted, by a person who hath the intire and independent disposal of the same, shall be bought off, but continue separated unto the Lord †, that is, unto sacred and religious uses. A field so devoted, shall abide the possession of the priests forever, according to the express determination in verse 21. And in like manner, a beast, or even a man so devoted, as a Cananaean or other Gentile slave might be, shall be appropriated always to the use of the priests about the tabernacle, instead of returning to their original proprietors, or being applied to common services. Then follow the words which have been so eagerly laid hold of by some, to evince that God authorized the Jews to destroy the lives of their fellow creatures at their pleasure and caprice, after devotement of them; ‘None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed;’ or, more literally, but with the same meaning, ‘Every * devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall not be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.’

xviii. 14. if a beast, upon its devotement, was to be made an holocaust, and consumed to ashes? Neither it is true could an unclean animal be useful to him for food, but it might for carriage and labour.—The reader may observe also, that the phrase of ‘Holiness to the Lord,’ is used concerning the silver and gold, and, like spoils of Jericho, which were to be brought into the treasury, Joshua, vi. 19.

† Thus do all the learned Jews understand the 28th verse, of a voluntary consecration to religious uses, whether of slave, or beast, or field, by the owner. See Selden de Jure Naturae et Gentium, lib. 4. cap. 10.

* Verse 29. כָּל חֵרֶם אֲשֶׁר יִחָרֵם מִן הָאָדָם לֹא יִפְדֶּה מִיָּדוֹ יוֹמָתוֹ *Col bherem asher iabbaram min haadam lo yippadeh moth iumath.*

Now such being the coherence of the words, it seems unreasonable to pretend that they speak, not of a devotement by man, but merely of a devotement by God, through which these persons, that were the objects of it, were invariably to be cut off, as the Canaanites, in the event of obstinacy, Deut. vii. 2. Josh. vi. 17. the Amalekites, Exod. xvii. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3. Deut. xxv. 17. and others. Thus indeed, there would be a commodious sense of the ordinance, and no handle left for saying, that it licensed the wanton slaughter of men; since the meaning would only be, ‘No man who shall be separated by God’s order and appointment, unto destruction, shall be redeemed or bought off, but shall surely be put to death*.’ But then it is so wholly unsuitable to the series of the chapter, which is filled with regulations about humane vows, to suppose no interposal of human devotement here described, that this gloss cannot, I think, upon any plausible grounds, gain our approbation.

Is there then any explication, which, while it is more agreeable to the context, by making a human devotement intervene, does not countenance a man’s killing another after such devotement, as inclination or interest might dictate, in order to be rid of him, and is at the same time, in other respects, unexceptionable?

In this view some have interpreted the ordinance

* It may be urged, I am aware, for this interpretation, that the clause, *After ish iehbarim Labovah*, which a man shall devote to the Lord, is not here inserted, as in the preceding verse. But the omission does not carry such weight as to justify that interpretation against the difficulties with which it is pressed.

as follows, ‘ No devoted beast, which shall be devoted by men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.’ But their interpretation appears inadmissible for these reasons. First, there is no term in the Hebrew text, to which that of *beast*, in this translation, corresponds; that running without any limitation or restriction, ‘ None devoted, which shall be devoted——shall be redeemed;’ or, according to the most strict version, ‘ Every devoted, which shall be devoted——shall not be redeemed, &c. Secondly, although it be true that מִן הָאָדָם *min haadam*, (by us turned, *of man*) absolutely considered, may signify the agency of a man, both according to the analogy of the Hebrew language, and according to the acceptance of the phrase itself elsewhere, it is extremely violent and strained to understand it with relation to the author, and not the subject of the devotement here, when it occurs in the verse immediately preceding, beyond all dispute, concerning the matter thereof; and there is no other term in the original, to ascertain and specify what the same is, unless it be this. Since, therefore, the statute cannot be supposed, with any probability, to treat * of a brute animal, but of a human creature as the sub-

* I lay no stress upon a remark which hath been made by some against the interpretation here rejected, ‘ That if *min haadam* related to the maker of the devotement, and not to the matter of it, the words would be superfluous; forasmuch as the lawgiver cannot be thought to treat of any other vows of this kind, than vows made by man.’ For it is obvious to reply, that such an unnecessary clause, to judge by this criterion or test, is to be met with frequently, and even in the foregoing verse, ‘ No devoted thing, which a man shall devote unto the Lord,’ &c. —But on the other hand, as to the argument from the Vulgate and Seventy translations in its behalf, besides that

ject of deytoment, we must try whether we can, upon this hypothesis, find out any exposition which does not make the law give every Jew power to kill a neighbour, not even a master to kill his slave, and much less a parent to slay his child on a previous arbitrary devotement, and yet ascribes to it a sense free from other objections, such, at least, as are of sufficient force to discredit and overthrow it.

The late Dr. Sykes † explains the meaning of it to be no more than this, ‘ That every person who is devoted or consecrated to the special service of God irreversibly, or for ever, by one having a right to do so, instead of being redeemed, shall die in that devoted state;’ or, as he expresses it more fully, ‘ Shall not be sacrificed, nor be put to death in an unusual and unnatural manner, by any method of violence, but shall only continue in that condition, till death, in the course of nature, put a period to his life.’ In favour of this sense, he also offers these arguments, which being so specious, and proceeding from a writer of so distinguished abilities, well deserve our careful attention.

First, he observes, That *hberem* signifies only an absolute giving to God for ever, a donation of a thing their authority is no way decisive, there appears to be no sure foundation for it, because the expressions which they use in rendering *min bandam*, are ambiguous, and may signify man’s being the subject of the devotement, as well as its author. Thus, the Vulgate hath here, ‘ Omnis consecratio quae offertur ab homine,’ while, for the same Hebrew phrase, it has, ‘ Ex homine,’ in the 28th verse. And the Seventy have here, *Απο ανθρωπου*, which is used by them undeniably in that other verse, to declare a man’s being the subject of the vow.

† See his Connection of Natural and Revealed Religion, chap. 13. especially pages 313, 318.

or person to him, with an intention that the same should never return to be a part of his own property, or employed for his own uses, but be God's in perpetuity. This he concludes from verse 20. of this same chapter, 'If he that sanctified or vowed the field, ' will not redeem it, or, if he hath sold it to another ' man, it shall not be redeemed any more; but the ' field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the Lord, as a field devoted, כְּשֹׂדֵה חֵרֶם *kesadeh bherem*, the possession thereof shall be the priests.' Likewise from Numb. xviii. 14. where it is said, ' Every devoted thing in Israel shall be the ' priests,' that is, shall be irrecoverably set apart for the benefit of the sacerdotal order. Nor may more be included in the expression of the matter of the *bherem* or devotements being holy to the Lord, in the 28th verse of this chapter, since tithes are stiled holy which were assigned for the maintenance of the priests and Levites, Levit. xxvii. 30, 31. The reader, moreover, may compare Ezek. xlv. 29. together with Micah, iv. 14. where we have the full phrase of consecrating or devoting substance unto the Lord; for, says God, in predicting the success of the Jews against the nations that should be gathered to annoy them, and their pious care to expend the spoils they should seize from them in his service, ' Arise, thresh, ' O daughter of Zion, for I will make thine horn ' iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and thou ' shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate, וְהִחַרְמַתִּי *Vehebharamti*, their gain unto the ' Lord,' &c.

Secondly, he remarks, That there is no word in the original answering to the adversative particle *but*, in

our version; while, through this supplement of our translators, the words which follow, are readily supposed to stand in way of contrast or opposition, and to denote the taking away of the life of the person devoted, in a hostile and forcible manner. For the Hebrew runs simply, 'Every one devoted, who shall be devoted of men, shall not be redeemed; dying he shall die.'

Thirdly and finally, he contends, That though there were a word in the original, answering to the particle *but*, yet the Hebrew expression in the last clause, doth not necessarily signify a death by human agency and instrumentality, but is applied to the extinction, or loss of life, in a natural way, upon different occasions; its import being no more than, dying he shall die; or, he shall surely die. And to establish this use of the phrase, he appeals to these passages of Scripture, as containing examples of it, Gen. ii. 17. where God declares to Adam, 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' Num. xxvi, 65. where he denounces to Moses concerning the rebellious Israelites, who had arrived to twenty years† of age and upwards, 'They shall surely die.' 2 Kings, viii. 10. where he returns this answer by the prophet Elisha to Hazael, whom the sick Ben-hadad had sent to enquire whether he should recover of his disease, 'He shall surely die.' To which he also adds his threatnings against the wicked by Ezekiel, iii. 18. xxxiii. 8. xviii. 13. For in all these places, according to him, the same form of expression which occurs here, does not stand for being put to death, but for dying a natural death through disease or casualty.

† See Numb. xiv. 23.

Such is Dr. Sykes's view of the statute, and such are his reasons in support thereof, who withal seems to think it might relate to the case of a master's devoting to God a Canaanite servant, in whom he had a property, for ever; or to a parent's devoting a son or daughter to the Lord in perpetuity, with their own consent, as happened in the case of Samuel by Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 11—28. For otherwise, he says, the devoting was void in itself, because a parent had no property in his children for ever. And certainly it is an advantage upon the side of his interpretation, that it continues the same sense of the *liberem* or devotement, which is agreed to take place in the former verse, instead of altering it from the acceptance of separating unto sacred uses, into that of separating unto destruction or loss of life, which it is commonly thought to require here. At the same time, it affixes to the statute a meaning, rational in itself, and agreeable to the genius of the Mosaic economy. On these accounts, together with the arguments above-mentioned, many may be disposed to receive it as the genuine explication of the ordinance. And if they do so, it must by consequence appear to them, that there is no foundation for any censure or blame of it, as giving a sanction to human sacrifices, or to the wanton and arbitrary excision of men.

After all however, if I can judge, there lie unanswerable objections against that hypothesis, which makes the sense of the law to be no more than, that a devoted person should continue separated from common to sacred uses, by service about the taber-

nacle, till in the course of nature he died, but these I throw into a note. *

* The objections which chiefly press Dr. Sykes's scheme, are these.

1. If the ordinance in ver. 29. treat only of the devotement of a man to the service of God for ever, as the preceding verse is allowed to do, it might have been omitted altogether, being superfluous; for what more is declared here, when it is said, a man devoted to the service of God for ever shall abide in that devoted state till he die, than had been said there already, in terms free from all obscurity and ambiguity, 'He shall not be sold or redeemed, but be most holy to the Lord.'

2. If it was necessary to add any explication of the statute in the former clause, about the unalienableness of living creatures which were devoted for ever to sacred uses, it is unaccountable upon Dr Sykes's principles, that there is no particular determination here, with regard to the treatment of brute animals, that were the subjects of such devotement, as well as about the fate of men, that were in this manner given to the Lord for perpetuity. Were not beasts as well as men that were dedicated to God for ever, to continue in a state of separation from common to religious uses, till they died? Why then have we not מן בהמה *min behemah* repeated here from ver. 28. as well as מן האדם *min haadam*?

3. The verb חרם *haram*, which occurs only in the conjugations *hiphil* and *hophal* through the Bible, seems almost invariably to imply the violent death of a living creature, whether man or beast, where it is used with relation to such a subject, and not to inanimate things, as houses or fields, silver or gold, &c. Hence in *hophal* it is turned 'to be utterly destroyed,' Exod. xxii. 20. compared with Deut. xiii. 12. &c. And in *hiphil* it is translated 'to destroy utterly,' Numb. xxi. 3, 4. Deut. ii. 34 iii. 6, 7. xiii. 15. xx. 17. Joshua, ii. 10. vi. 21. viii. 26. x. 28, 35. 37, 40. xi. 11, 12. Judges, i. 17. xxi. 3, 11. 1 Sam. xiii. 9. xv. 3, 18. and in many other places. And that is said to be חרם *hberem* a cursed or devoted thing, which being alive was set apart absolutely to destruction and death. Deut. vii. 26. 'The graven images of their gods ye shall burn with fire, neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be *hberem* a cursed thing like it,' that is 'separated to destruction' Deut. xiii. 17. 'There shall cleave nought of the *hberem* or cursed thing in the

Another explication of the statute, which also frees it from all imputation of encouraging the wanton and capricious destruction of the lives of men, proposed and justified.

As therefore I am dissatisfied with these accounts of the statute, I will propose another interpretation of it, and submit it to the candour of the reader.

'city unto thee,' that is, none of the persons or cattle separated unto death therein, as appears from what goes before, since all the inhabitants and cattle in any city, which had apostatized to the worship of other gods, were ordered to be utterly destroyed with the edge of the sword, ver. 15. Joshua, vi. 17. 'The city Jericho shall be *bherem*, even it and all that are therein,' that is, 'The living creatures therein shall be separated unto death,' for it follows, 'Every living flesh shall be put to death, save Rahab and her family.' 1 Sam. xv. 28. 'The people took of the spoil of the Amalekites, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things, which should have been utterly destroyed,' literally, 'Which were *bherem* or a curse, separated to irretrievable destruction,' about which see ver. 3. of the same chapter. Indeed this observation concerning the acceptation of *hharam* and *bherem*, where they occur in connection with living substances, holds so constantly, that I do not know any exception from it, unless it be in the verse which precedes that under our consideration, where we are sufficiently guarded against taking it in that sense, by its being added immediately, The man who is devoted, instead of being sold or redeemed, shall be holy to the Lord, which is never affirmed of any man, who was to be cut off from his people; and again in Numb. xviii. 14. where after it is appointed, 'Every *bherem* or thing devoted in Israel, shall be the priests;' it follows, 'Every thing that openeth the matrix in all flesh which they bring unto the Lord, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine.' But then to prevent any mistake, it is forthwith subjoined, 'Nevertheless, the first born of man shalt thou surely redeem.' This must therefore create a prejudice against Dr. Sykes's interpretation of the

To make way for this I remark, that the Jewish masters very generally * understand this twenty-ninth

statute before us, where no similar expression to these is thrown in, to hinder our error about the meaning of the phrase.

Lastly, and chiefly, the examples which he brings for that sense, which he puts upon the expression in the last clause מֵת מָוֶת *meth umath*, 'He shall surely die,' are no way satisfactory. In one of the passages, where is God's answer by the prophet to Hazael, concerning Benhadad. a death by violence was unquestionably meant; wherefore it hath been mentioned by him with great impropriety. And in all the rest of them, though not dying by human stroke; yet dying by a divine sentence, in the way of punishment for some transgression committed by the sufferer, and in testimony of displeasure against him for his offence, is spoken of, which dying but for that fault would have been avoided, either altogether as in the case of Adam, or in the way of its infliction at least, as in the case of the rebellious Israelites; so that they fall short of being good authorities, for the meaning he affixes. Besides, which is especially to be attended to, here the verb מָוֶת is in *hophal*, in which conjugation it is always rendered by us, except in one passage, of which afterwards, *put to death* or *slain*, Exod. xxi. 29. xxxv. 2. Levit. xix. 20. xx. 11. 2 Kings, xiv. 6. &c. yea, is so turned with equal uniformity, in that very tense, number, and person, construed with the infinitive which occurs in this place, though such sense be opposed here. For so the reader will find by comparing our version with the original, Gen. xxvi. 11. Ex. xix. 12. xxi. 12, 15, 17. xxii. 18. xxxi. 14. Lev. xx. 2, 9, 10, 15. xxiv. 16, 17. to omit other places. Nor is there room to dispute the justice of this translation; whereas in all the passages, save the one above excepted, that are referred to by Dr. Sykes, the original expressions being מָוֶת *tamuth*, or מָוֶת *umuth*, or מָוֶת *umuthu* the verb is in *kal* and always with reason turned *die*. Even as to that one Ezek. xviii. 13. where the verb is in *hophal* with the infinitive as here, it cannot be questioned, but it would have been a more exact translation 'He shall be put to death.'

Such are the objections which persuade me to reject Dr. Sykes's account of the statute, whatever attachment I may have once had to it.

* I express myself thus, because some of them, instead of adopting this sense, imagine the law regards men under capital sentence by a ci-

verse to treat of a very different kind of *bherem* or devotement, from that intended in the former verse, even one by which persons were separated, not to religious uses, but to excision or loss of life. And it will seem less strange, that the meaning of the term should vary in such manner here, when we consider that the same expression upon other occasions, comprehends under it both a separation to sacred services, and a separation to death, according to the different subjects to which it is applied. Thus it is uncontestedly taken, Joshua; vi. 17, 18. 'The city Jericho shall be accursed, or devoted, as it is in the margin, *bherem*, even it and all which is therein to the Lord; only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent; and you in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing *habherem*, lest you make yourselves accursed (destroy yourselves) *tahharimu*, when you take of the accursed thing *habherem*.' For here, all living creatures, whether of the human or brute species, with the exception of Rahab and her family, were by divine order to be killed; but the gold and silver, and like things, to be

vil magistrate, and provides, that no price should be accepted as a ransom for any person's life, who was in that situation, under pretence that he had been devoted to religious services, however it might answer the rules for estimation laid down in this chapter, ver. 2—8. Such a person was to be cut off notwithstanding, according to the decree of the judge. So Selden ubi supra p. 550, represents their notion, if I apprehend him aright, and speaks of it as found in the most antient Jewish books, the Babylonish Gemara, and the Siphra, an antient commentary on Leviticus so named; and as embraced by several Rabbis of great reputation in later times, as Maimonides, Micotzi, Jarchi, Bechai, and others.

reserved unto pious uses. Accordingly, it is said ver. 19. after the general declaration now recited, ‘ All the silver and gold are consecrated, more strictly *are holiness*, to the Lord,’ which is the very phrase in ver. 28. of this chapter; and when the Israelites became masters of the city, we are told ver. 21. ‘ They utterly destroyed *iahharimu* all that was in the city, both men and women, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.’ ver. 29. ‘ And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; only the silver and the gold, and the vessels of brass and iron, they brought into the house of the Lord.’ This change of sense moreover, from a separation unto religious uses, to a separation unto the absolute loss of life, is sufficiently intimated by the finishing clause in the passage under our consideration, (which if I am not mistaken hath been manifested in the last note to be incapable of any other interpretation than ‘ He shall be surely slain,’ or ‘ He shall be surely put to death,’) since it shews that the *bherem* described in it, inferred an excision by violence from the land of the living, while the *bherem* spoken of in the former verse, only issued in a perpetual and unalienable state of holiness unto the Lord.

But though the Jewish doctors have commonly interpreted, as hath been said, the *bherem* or devotion here, of a separation to be cut off, they never supposed it was the intention of the law to say, that a man with validity might devote, and with acceptance before God kill another, according to his fancy and humour; No. How indeed could they lodge a right of this kind in any Jew, when, as was shewed, they

do not even allow to a Hebrew master, the power of life and death over his Gentile slave? Now, a devotement is only made with binding force, to the extent of a man's title of disposal; and procedure according to it is only just, in the same proportion, these rights being exactly paramount or equal to one another. They therefore limited and restrained this statute about devoting unto death, with a legal effect of exelision, in respect of the persons who were the subjects of it; and so would I, though with some little alteration. For I suppose it to relate to none but those, whose lives were appointed by God to be destroyed. Thus the Amalekites, and all the Canaanites who would not consent to terms of peace, were to be put to death by God's express command,

† These Jewish commentators make enemies and contemners of public authority in general, the proper subjects of devotement, and also, for most part at least, make it necessary the devotement should proceed from persons vested with magistracy and rule, or from the whole congregation of Israel; I say for the most part, because if I understand Abarbanel in Pirush Thorah; fol. 275. col. 2. as quoted and commented upon by Selden, De Jure Nat' et Gent. 4. 10. page 549. he expounds it even of an individual's devoting unto death a person whose life was forfeited. For he speaks thus, 'In priori commate devovens fit, qui devovet id quod suis esset in bonis. In posteriori commate devovens fit, qui devovet homines qui sui quidem non essent, tametsi ita in devovens potestate haberentur, ut ex jure belli seu militia singulari suum fortiretur effectum devotatio ipsa.' Again, 'Hujus speciei erat anathema Hierichuntis. Si nempe inciderit in potestatem cujuspiam Israelitae vita hominis, ex iis qui ibi caperentur, non poterit redimi, sed omnino morti tradendus erit; nihilominus, quod ad anathema illud, quo servum suum quis Domino devoverit, attinet, is morti tradendus non est. Tantum is donarium est, ut ligna discindat, aquam hauriat, et sacerdotibus ministerium praestet. Atque hic est literalis loci sensus.' So likewise Bar Nachman, and others.

Deut. vii. 2. xxv. 17, 19. 1 Sam. xv. 3. In the same manner, whoever should lie with a beast, sacrifice to an idol deity, or commit certain other atrocious crimes, against which capital punishment was denounced in the law, were to be cut off. They therefore, who belonged to these classes of men, or who perpetrated these enormities, might be devoted unto death without any injury or wrong to them. And on account of the conformity and agreeableness of such a measure to the will of God, they might hereon be said to be devoted, or as the phrase is in the book of Joshua, vi. 17. about the inhabitants of Jericho, 'To be accursed, to the Lord.' And * concerning such, when they had been devoted to death, I reckon the ordinance here to be enacted, 'None devoted who is devoted of men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death.'

Is it objected, that where was a divine command to destroy life, a devotement by men would be needless, wherefore it cannot be thought the statute before us hath any reference to such a case? I answer, this does not follow; Even where was an obnox-

* To restrict it to them, seems to me far more reasonable, than to extend it as the Jews do, to all foes of the state, and to all who might have incurred a sentence of death by the violation of some public edict, whether of the king, or of the sanhedrim, or of the whole congregation, to which a capital sanction had been annexed; for might not persons engaged in war against the state, have sometimes right on their side? and might not such edicts be sometimes foolish and injudicious, tyrannical and oppressive, so that the transgression of them would not merit the loss of life? and can we suppose God would ratify a vow of destroying men in these circumstances? Surely not. The history of Saul and Jonathan will very well illustrate the sentiment here, and evince the absurdity of the interpretation to which it is opposed.

ousness to suffer death, through a previous order of God to kill men, or an antecedent declaration by him that they ought to be slain, a devotement might be used, the more effectually to secure obedience to the divine will, against all temptations from motives of pity or considerations of interest to transgress it, by sparing their lives that were under such doom; for do not men often bring themselves under additional obligations by vow, to practise what is already duty by God's requirement, who is their supreme sovereign, the better to secure their performance of it amidst inducements to its neglect? Which is more, and fully exposes the weakness of this reasoning, we find in fact, a human vow of destruction sometimes interposed, where was an actual liability before to be cut off, from God's antecedent direction. Thus Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord; and said, 'If thou wilt indeed deliver this people' (the people of Arad the Canaanite,) 'into my hand, then I will utterly destroy *behharemti* them, and their cities.' And they acted suitably hereunto, for 'When the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel,' in this vow of killing these Canaanites, which the reader must perceive was only a vow to act as God had enjoined them, 'And delivered them up into their hands, they utterly destroyed *iabherem* them, and their cities; and they called the name of the place Hhormah,' a curse and devotement, or a cursed and devoted thing, Numb. xxi. 2, 3. Nor may it be improper to compare the history, Judges, xxi. 5. where we read, 'The congregation had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the Lord to Mizpeh,' upon the public authoritative summons to

arms, that they might punish the tribe of Benjamin for refusing to animadvert on the men of Gibeah, after their barbarous usage of the Levite's concubine, "Saying, "He shall surely be put to death." the better to guard against indulgence to the offenders, tho' disobedience to such summons must have been by the constitution capital,

Is it urged farther against this interpretation, that Moses must be thought here to intend the devotement of persons who were private property by their owners, which those Amalekites and Canaanites, and those malefactors that were sentenced to suffer excision by God, were not? I reply, It is very true that in the preceding verse Moses speaks concerning that which an individual should devote to the Lord, or separate for religious uses, out of his substance and possession, whether field, or beast, or man. But it cannot hence be concluded, that in this verse also he speaks concerning an individual's devotement of a man to death that belonged to him, or made part of his estate. For no master had a legal right to take away the life of his slave when he inclined; far less therefore a parent to take away that of a son or daughter at pleasure: and least of all, a citizen to take away that of a neighbour according to his convenience or inclination. Besides, the words are not repeated here which are found in the 28th verse †, and which require us to understand the subject of devotement therein mentioned, to be private property.

† Guffetius, that celebrated critic, (who having been forced to quit France, like many other learned Protestants, by the repeal of the edict of Nantes, was first minister of the French church at Dort in Holland, and afterwards professor of theology, and of the Greek language,

Once more, is it insisted on, that it is taking too great liberty and freedom to introduce such a limitation of the subject of devotement here spoken of, as 'Appointed or doomed to die by the will of God,' and the like? It is easy to answer, some restriction must be admitted by all, unless they will make this ordinance of Jehovah, to signify that every man devoted to death by another, however innocent and useful, yea however independent upon him, and exempt from his jurisdiction and authority in other matters, should hereon suffer excision without remedy or prevention. But this is a sense so subversive of all order and happiness in society, and so repugnant to that sound wisdom and understanding, in general conspicuous through the Mosaic system of legislation, in a word, so wild and absurd, that methinks any person should be ashamed to maintain it as the genuine one. Since then some limitation must be admitted, why not this, by which the meaning of the statute becomes rational, and all the inconveniencies of that interpretation are avoided? Are we not often obliged in like manner to acknowledge some ellipsis? or, which is the same thing, to supply some word in other laws delivered to the Jewish nation, that we may render them equitable in their nature, and

in the university of Groningen, till his death) in his Commentary on the Hebrew tongue, builds so much on the omission of these words, *which is his*, in this 29th verse, when they occur in the former, as to express himself thus, if I may rely upon Michaelis's quotation of him upon the place, "Omne devotum," omne scilicet aliud quod non est 'de propriis viri, ut erat ver. 28. quod anathema sit secundum vocabulum Dei.' And perhaps from these last words I may have taken the hint of my explication.

consistent with the rest? For instance, what strange contradiction would follow, and what infliction of death, where it was not deserved, would be enjoined, without having recourse to this in Numb. xxxv. 30. ‘Who so killeth any person, by the testimony of witnesses shall the killer be killed.’ For so runs the original literally, though our translators have prudently substituted, for the term *killer*, the word *murderer*, which word always carries in it the idea of atrocious guilt. Both common sense, and other regulations of the legislator, shew that not every person who takes away the life of another, which may be done, in some situations and circumstances, very innocently, nay commendably; but a person who destroys the life of another, unjustly and presumptuously, is here alone designed. Nevertheless, we do not fall into any mistake about the scope and import of that ordinance, nor raise any perverse inferences from the general form of it, whatever handle there may be, from the application of the term elsewhere, to killing according to demerit, Pf. lxii. 3. and to killing unawares and by chance, without any ill intention, Deut. iv. 42. xxv. 26—28. xix. 46, &c. Why then will we not exercise the same fairness and candour here, and admit also a reasonable limitation of this determination? ‘None devoted, who is devoted of men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death.’

Thus I have laid before the reader my explication of the statute, which, though it hath some resemblance to that which many learned Jews have given of it, is in reality different. And if the light in which I have placed it be a just one, how plain must it be

there is no reason to say, that Moses by it enjoined the destruction of mens lives whenever any should make a vow to that purpose? and how evident there is still less ground to complain, that he ordered them to be sacrificed? For there is not one word concerning oblation upon the altar here at all. Nor is there any appearance, through the whole history of the nation, that any human creature, upon such devotion as is called *hberem*, was ever presented to God as a victim. On the contrary, men that were the subjects of it, were slain with the edge of the sword, as the inhabitants of Jericho and Amalek, Josh. vi. 17—21. and 1 Sam. xv. 21. The disquisition about the meaning of this law, hath indeed been long. But I could not well shorten it in consistence with my aim, which was to overthrow the invidious glosses that have been affixed to it, and been matter of triumph to infidels and sceptics, as well as of trouble and grief to believers,—to examine the merits of other explications, which have been proposed for preventing the insults of the enemies of revelation, and removing the disquietude of its friends,—and to open and support in the best manner I could, what seemed to me a more dextrous and unexceptionable interpretation thereof; for which reason, I hope, the reader will excuse its prolixity. If he approve my hypothesis, he will not think this labour ill bestowed. If not, as indeed about points of this nature, a diversity of critical judgment may still be expected, he will have here met with an account of the various solutions of the difficulty created by this law, which learned and thoughtful men have advanced, and may out of them all choose what seems preferable; as it must,

from what hath been said, appear most unreasonable to put upon it the sense of our author, and other scoffers at the Sacred Books.

A reflection upon the differences of opinion among learned men about the meaning of this law.

I WILL only add, by way of conclusion here; that there are difficulties in ascertaining the original intention and sense of this statute, and thence a variety of opinions among divines concerning it, need not be much wondered at. In like manner, there are intricacies in some of the laws delivered by the decemvirs to the Roman people, and, on this account, a wide difference between the sentiments of civilians and critics about their import. That I may not appear to throw out this assertion without reason, I will mention two examples. But I doubt not that they are, who are better acquainted with publications at home and abroad, relative to these laws of the twelve tables, as they are called, can easily produce other statutes among them which are obscure, and as to their meaning much controverted.

The one is the law about punishing theft, upon search and discovery of the stolen goods, by the *lanx* and *licium*, ‘Si furtum lance licioque conceptum escit, atque ‘uti manifestum vindicator.’* For about its sense the learned have been much divided, some with Fes-

* See Aulus Gellius, lib. 2. cap. 18. who also informs us the investigation of thefts, by the method here described, was gone into disuse in his time. 16. 19. ‘Furtorum quaestiones per lancem et licium evanuerunt.’

tus, making the *licium* the cincture of any person who entered another man's house, to try whether goods, which had been clandestinely carried away from the proprietor, were lodged in it, while the *lanx* was some plate which he held before his eyes, from respect to the females that might dwell there; others judging the *licium* the habit of the priests alone when they went upon the errand of detecting a thief, and the *lanx* some plate, in which, for ceremonies sake, they concealed bread seasoned with the stone called † *aetites*, with intention of offering it to any suspected person: and many explaining it still differently, as Gothofred mentions † no fewer than four notions about it, and since his time more have been started.

The other law is that about the treatment of the insolvent debtor, which is also preserved to us by the same author*. And it may be thought more apposite, as, like that of Moses, it hath received an interpretation very cruel and inhuman. This writer first tells us, that any person who owned, or was convicted of the debt for which he was sued before the magistrate, had a truce of thirty days for paying it; —that if he did not offer the money, or give security and bail to find it, at his citation before the praetor, when these days were ended, he might be carried away to the creditor's house, as to a Bridewell, or

† This stone was so named because said to be found in every eagle's nest: and it was believed, as Dioscorides tells us, to have the extraordinary and peculiar virtue of discovering and catching thieves.

† Gothofred ad Institut. lib. 4. tit. 1. De Obligationibus quae ex delicto nascuntur.

* Aulus Gellius, lib. 20. cap. 7.

house of correction, and there be bound with fetters not below † fifteen pounds weight, where he might live at his own expence if he pleased, but, if not, could only claim from his master a pound of flour in the day, which was the allowance of slaves; and in this state he was to continue sixty days, unless he made an agreement or composition with his creditor:—that during this interval he was to be brought forth into the comitium, before the praetor, three successive market days‡; and proclamation was to be made what sum he was sentenced to pay. Then, adds Gellius, I should rather say Sextus Cecilius the lawyer, who is introduced by him as interlocutor in a dialogue with Favorinus the philosopher, through the whole account of the regulations upon this head.

‘Tertiis autem nundinis capite poenas dabant, aut trans Tigrim peregre venum dabant.—Quod si pluribus fuerit judicatus, secare si vellent et partiri corpus addicti sibi hominis, permiserunt. Et quidem verba ipsa legis dicam ne existimes invidiam me istam forte formidare. “Tertiis, inquit, nundinis partis secanto; si plus minusve secuerint se (i. e. sine) fraude esto.” But these words of the law have given rise to great disputes; for some expound them to signify, that the poor debtor was to be put to death; and if he was adjudged to several creditors, to be quartered into so many parts as were equal to their number: for which indeed they have

† Some read the text, not above 15 pounds weight.

‡ These nundinae, or market-days, returned every ninth day. So Dion Cassius expressly tells us, lib. 40. cap. 47. edit. Reimar. *Ἡ ἀγορὰ ἢ διὰ τῶν ἐννέα καὶ ἡμερῶν ἀγομενὰ.* Page 251.

the authority of this Cecilius*, of Quintilian, and of Tertullian. But others, anxious to vindicate the Romans from that charge of barbarity which this interpretation tends to fix upon them, explain the terms of the statute only, to denote that he was to be degraded from the state of a freeman into that of a slave, and to labour for the benefit of his creditor; or, if he had several creditors, to be sold for their advantage, and they to share the price of his person among them. If any, however, did not put in his claim, he was to blame himself; the interest of the rest could not suffer through his neglect. So Bynkerhoek, Heineccius, and Dr. Taylor† of Cambridge, to omit others.

Now surely, if there are not wanting perplexities and difficulties in the laws of the decemvirs to the

* That Cecilius understood it so, if it be not plain from the passage recited, is abundantly manifest by these his other words, which I omitted after *ibant*, ‘*Sed eam capitis poenam horrificam atrocitatis ostentu novisque terroribus metuendam reddidit;*’ and by the reflection he subjoins, ‘*Nihil immitius profecto,*’ though he acknowledges it was never executed in one instance. The same thing appears concerning Quintilian, who, in his *Instit. Orator. lib. 3. cap. 6.* writes thus, ‘*Sunt enim quaedam non laudabilia natura, sed jure concessa, ut in duodecim tabulis debitoris corpus inter creditores dividi licuit, quam legem mos publicus repudiavit*’ And says Tertullian, when he is declaiming upon the changes which the Roman laws had undergone, *Apolog. cap. 4.* ‘*Sed et iudicatos retro in partes secari a creditoribus leges erant. Consensu tamen publico crudelitas postea erasa, et in pudoris notam capitis poena conversa.*’

† See Bynkerhoekii *Observationes*, and Taylor’s *Commentarius ad L. Decemviralem de Inope Debitore in partes secando. Cantab. 1742.* where he contends for this sense from the gentleness of the Roman laws in general; the obsolescence of the words in which the laws of the twelve tables were expressed, together with the disuse of some of them

Romans, it is not surprising such should be found to attend this, as well as some other ordinances in the Mosaic code, when we consider that the Jewish law-giver lived in times much more remote, and that there are not equal assistances for investigating the real design of every statute promulged by him, as there are for discovering the intention of these other legislators, by the many Roman authors, whose writings are conveyed down to us; and who, if they lived not while their regulations were in daily execution, lived, one would think, when the remembrance thereof could not be altogether lost and obliterated. I needed not, however, to have gone so far back as the laws of the decemvirs.—There are, I believe, in statute books far more modern, passages which are dark and obscure, so that those who are best able to judge, are not agreed about the certain and determinate meaning of them, but have much debate concerning it. Nor is it a circumstance peculiar to codes of laws; but common to all antient writings whatever. This perplexity therefore, in the ordinance about devotion, and these different comments and expositions, to which the same hath given rise, should not offend us, far less lead us to form any conclusion to the prejudice of the authority of that body of laws in which it occurs. Of the divine original hereof there may be good evidence, whatever clauses may be therein found that are hard to be understood in these later ages, and occasion disputes among us about their sense like the present one, even as there may be sufficient

before the times of Gellius and Quintilian: and the milder acceptance which the terms admit, *caput* being often put for a man's liberty, and *partes* for a share of his substance or service.

proof of the establishment of a statute book in any kingdom or realm, though there are obscurities in it, and therefore controversies about its exposition. Meantime, they exercise our diligence, try our candour, and serve to abate our pride and vanity.

S E C T I O N VII.

Of Mr. Voltaire's saying, That Jephtha sacrificed his daughter, and Samuel Agag, by virtue of the law in Leviticus, in several places of his works; and of his affirming, That Ezekiel promised the Jews should feast upon human flesh, in his Treatise on Toleration.

IN the same page of the Philosophy* of History, which gave rise to our discussion of the sense of the law in Leviticus xxvii. Mr Voltaire adds, as was already hinted, 'It is by virtue of this law, that we find Jephtha sacrifices his own daughter, and the priest Samuel cuts into morsels king Agag.' This remark he repeats, both in his Philosophical† Dictionary, and in his Dialogues and Essays‡ Literary and Philosophical: and he had proposed it before with an

* Page 172.

† Article Jephtha, or Human Sacrifices, p. 226. 227. where having said, 'Jephtha vowed his daughter for a burnt-offering, and performed his vow,' and then expressed himself about the Jewish law in Leviticus, in the words before quoted p. 137. he subjoins, 'In consequence of this law it was, that Samuel hewed king Agag in pieces, though Saul had spared him.'

‡ Essay, Of the Jews, p. 58. after the passage produced p. 141: it follows, 'It was in consequence of this law, that Jephtha vowed and

additional argument to prove that the Jews took delight in human sacrifices, in his *Treatise on Toleration*, § thus, ‘ It is evident that the Jews offered human sacrifices to God, witness that of Jephtha’s daughter, and of king Agag hewed in pieces by the prophet Samuel; and we find the prophet Ezekiel promising them by way of encouragement, that they should feast upon human flesh, “ Ye shall eat of the flesh of the horse, and of his rider, and ye shall drink the blood of the princes of the earth,” Ezek. xxxix. 49.’ There also he observes in a note, ‘ The death of Agag king of the Amalekites may be looked upon as a real sacrifice. Saul had made this prince a prisoner of war, and had admitted him to a capitulation, notwithstanding that the priest and the prophet Samuel had charged him to spare no one, saying to him expressly, “ Go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord.” In this melancholy adventure, we have a vow, a priest, and a victim, consequently it is a real sacrifice.’

But is there not here also much cause of complaint against Mr. Voltaire, for unfair dealing with the sacred writers?

As to Jephtha’s daughter, whose history is recorded Judges, xi. 29—40. it is still a great question among learned Jews and Christians, whether he vow-

‘ butchered his daughter, and that Samuel the prophet hewed king Agag Saul’s prisoner in pieces.’

§ Chap. 12. page 167.

ed to kill her on the altar, or to consecrate her to attend the tabernacle through life in a state of celibacy; by consequence, whether he disposed of her in the one way or in the other. Nor do I think it needful here to decide the point, as it would require a long discussion. I am willing to suppose at present, that Jephtha treated his daughter in like manner as he would have done an animal from the herd or the flock, which was an holocaust or burnt sacrifice. Nor indeed could destroying her life in a different form than with the rites and ceremonies of such an oblation, ever be called dealing with her according to his vow, upon * that translation of the vow, ‘ Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, shall surely be the Lord’s, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering;’ which for argument’s sake is now admitted to be the true one. Nevertheless there is still no reason to blame the law in Leviticus for his behaviour. For it hath been shewn

* Every one who is acquainted with Scripture commentaries, knows that the words of the vow are otherwise rendered, so as to make it consist of an alternative, ‘ Whatsoever cometh forth to meet me— shall surely be the Lord’s, or, I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.’ In pursuance of which disjunctive sense of the particle, (Exod. xii. 4. xxi. 15, 17. Deut. xvii. 1. 2 Sam. ii. 19. &c.) many imagine Jephtha reserved to himself the liberty of separating any member of his family that should meet him to attendance about the tabernacle, and only engaged to make a holocaust or burnt sacrifice of a brute animal, if that should first occur to him at his return. Accordingly, they think Jephtha set apart his daughter to such ministrations, instead of laying her as a victim upon God’s altar, and that he was so afflicted in the prospect of it as he appears to have been, because hereby he was cut off from all hope of posterity; withal, they adopt our marginal version of Judges, xi. 40.

that law was never intended to convey to parents a power of taking away their childrens lives upon devotement, at pleasure. If therefore he was actuated by a regard to it, it must have been after a perverse and wild interpretation thereof; in this way however, his criminal conduct can no more with justice be charged upon it, than the fierce animosities about doctrines among Christians can be imputed to the gospel, which are only the accidental effects of it through their own evil passions, or than the diseases of surfeiting and excess can be imputed to corn and wine, which are only the casual result thereof through mens intemperate and foolish use of them. As then it would be wrong to censure Christianity and the good creatures of God, for those things of which they are but the innocent occasion, so is it to arraign and accuse the ordinance in Leviticus, for Jephtha's butchery of his daughter. But indeed why should it be thought, that the recollection of that statute had any influence upon him at all? It does not contain one word about putting the man or woman to death in the shape of a burnt-sacrifice, that should be the subject of devotement, as he is supposed to have done her; besides, the word **חֵרֶם** *hherem*, which is the term in the law for that devotement, or vow with an execration and curse that was irredeemably fatal, never occurs even once through the whole history of Jephtha's forming and fulfilling his engagement; and yet it is unreasonable to think this would have happened, had a reverence for it and a consideration of its tenor and purport been the source and spring of his procedure: **נָדַר** *neder*, which is the expression in the ritual for a redeemable vow, is the word uni-

formly and invariably employed in the narrative of the transaction ; so that for any thing which appears, he might if he had pleased, notwithstanding his promise, have saved his daughter's life, without any violation of the rule ' Whoever is *hberem* devoted of ' men shall be put to death,' even although it had given power to a father upon a *hberem* or devotement to kill a son or daughter, which it did not, because no *hberem* had been uttered or pronounced by him about her. But it seems by some principles he was led to think it honourable to lose her, as she herself, according to the hypothesis we reason upon, was willing to be slain. Why then should it have been said by Mr. Voltaire, that by virtue of the law in Leviticus Jephtha sacrificed his daughter, when if she was put to death, which I leave undetermined, this law never authorized it, and indeed never seems to have been thought of through the * whole affair. Did not

* Some who have seen the learned Dr. Randolph's sermon on Jephtha's vow before the university of Oxford, June 8, 1766. or the abstract of it in the Reviews, may be of opinion I ought to have availed myself of his explication. He turns the vow thus, ' Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer to him (i. e. to the Lord,) a burnt offering.' And he understands that Jephtha vowed two things, to dedicate whosoever should come forth of the doors of his house to meet him to the service of the Lord, and likewise to offer on occasion of his victory a burnt-offering to the Lord of some clean beast, such as the law allowed and God would accept, both which, he adds, he religiously performed ; that is, he devoted his daughter to wait on the tabernacle in a state of perpetual virginity, and brought some brute animal fit for sacrifice from the fold or the stall to God's altar. And the same interpretation seems to have been formerly proposed in the *Miscellanea Groningana*, published under the care and direction of Dr. Gerdes, profes-

superstition often carry some of the Jews to do violence to the strongest affection of nature, I mean the

for of divinity at Groningen, though I do not suppose that Dr. Randolph borrowed it thence; for in the account given of a part of that collection by the *Acta Eruditorum Lipsiae*, 1739. are these words, 'Pag. 347. Judic. xi. 31. verbum *וְעָבַדְתִּיבָּהּ* *Vechnalithibih*, no-
' *va* interpretatione sic redditur, " Et offeram ipsi (i. e. Jehovae,) ho-
' *locustum* " Ac ita magna hujus loci tollitur difficultas.' I will there-
fore briefly mention these reasons, which have offered themselves to
me against adopting it. First, it affords a strong presumption that Jeph-
tha's vow did not consist of these two branches which he attributes to
it, that the historian, instead of mentioning one syllable about his offer-
ing a brute sacrifice on God's altar in conformity to it, speaks only of
his dealing with his daughter according to his vow, as if this was all
that was requisite to accomplish it in its full extent, and no more had
remained to be done, in order to approve his fidelity therein. Nor would
it be a sufficient answer to this remark, to say, ' The sacred writer
' might neglect to record his performance of his vow in this branch of
' it, because every one would conclude his carefulness to fulfill it here,
' from his diligence to act agreeably to it, where it could not be veri-
' fied without offering the greatest violence to nature, by depriving his
' only child of life, or at least of all hope of issue through his consignment
' of her to perpetual celibacy.' For it is the manner of the sacred writ-
ers to be more minute in their details, and to give us a particular re-
lation how persons of unsuspected piety obeyed God's commands in more
easy instances, after shewing us their compliance with them in more
hard and difficult cases, where were stronger dissuaves from affection
and interest, as may be seen by looking into the account of Abraham's be-
haviour, Gen. xxii. 1, 13. and into the story of Gideon and others.
But secondly, the chief objection against that explication is this, that it
affixes a sense to Jephtha's phrase *Vechnalithibih*, which is totally repug-
nant to its constant acceptation in the Bible. It is true, an ellipsis of the
preposition which denotes the dative case between a verb and its suffix
is not unusual, as indeed his examples of it are all right, except the
last from Ezekiel, xxiv. 3 for here there is no suffix at all. but a noun
following the verb apart, and the preposition of the dative case actual-

parental one, in direct contradiction to the most peremptory prohibitions of God's law, and the most se-

ly intervening between them, so far is it from being omitted. משל אל בית המרי *Masheh el beth hamari*, 'Parable thou to the rebellious house.' But then there is no instance at all of such an ellipsis after the verb גנלה *gnalah* in a like state of construction through the whole sacred book, though it occur so often as ten times with the same suffix which it hath here, and more than thirty times with other suffixes in its pages. Accordingly, its suffixes, that is, the pronouns subjoined to it, have always an accusative, and never a dative signification, being turned respectively *us*, *thee*, *me*, *him*, or *it*, and *them*, as the sense evidently required, instead of *to us*, *to thee*, *to me*, *to him* or *to it*, and *to them*. The Doctor urges, I am aware, 'That if the noun הו *hu* had related to the person or animal who was to have come forth to meet Jephtha, and who was to have been offered up, the next word should regularly have been expressed לעולה *legolah*, whereas now there is nothing in the Hebrew to answer the word *for* in our translation.' But there does not seem to be any solid foundation for this critical observation. For there are not wanting instances where the same word *gnolah* is undeniably introduced after a verb, with a noun following or preceding it, which expresses the matter of the burnt-sacrifice, without any such prefix as that which he makes necessary. Thus after גנף *gnafah*, Levit. v. 10. xiv. 31. xv. 15, Num. viii. 12. xv. 8. where however our translators have inserted *for*, as if the prefix had been in the original, so likewise after בקרב *bikrib*, Numb. xxviii. 19. and even after *gnalah* the verb here, 1 Sam. vi. 14. for what we render, 'They offered the kine for a burnt-offering,' is in the original *Esh happaroth hagnalu gnolah labovah*, instead of *legnolah*, and Ezek. xliii. 24. where what we turn 'They shall offer them up for a burnt-offering to the Lord,' is in Hebrew, *Hagnalu otham gnolah* (not *legnolah*) *labovah*. Why then might it not be without the prefix here also, though the pronoun *hu*, which makes the suffix, mark the object of the oblation, as in other places, Gen. xxii. 2. 13. 1 Sam. vii. 9? Certainly every argument to the contrary from the analogy of the language is hereby destroyed. But which must be still more decisive, we have the same verb with the same suffix construed without any prefix with *gnolah*, in the very sense beyond all controversy, which our

were denunciations of his prophets, by burning their sons and daughters to Molech? and might not Jephtha also have pursued the measures we suppose him to have taken from wrong principles, though not countenanced by a divine precept? But it seems unnecessary to spend more words in confuting the cavil.

With regard again to Samuel's hewing Agag in pieces, or cutting him to pieces with a consecrated cleaver, as * he calls it, 1 Sam. xv. 33. there is still less pretence for saying that it was done by virtue of the law in Leviticus; for here there was no vow or devoting to destruction by Samuel or any other man, which could oblige to cut off Agag in compliance with that requirement, though it had bore the meaning which our author ascribes to it. There was only a divine order to spare none of the Amalekites, but to slay them utterly, which Saul disobeyed in saving their king's life, but Samuel fulfilled by taking it away, as in verses 1—3. and 18, 19. If Samuel's action be thus expressed, 'He hewed, or cleft him in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal,' it does not intimate he was made a victim to please him; it only signifies that his life was destroyed by Samuel in zeal for the honour of God, and in solicitude for

version gives it in the place we have been considering. Thus it is said 2 Kings, iii. 27. 'The king of Moab took his eldest son, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall,' *Ve iegnalehu gnolah*, not *le-gnolah*; but I must not enlarge. These are principally the reasons, why I could not admit Dr. Randolph's ingenious explication, whatever advantages in other respects attend it.

* Philof. Dictionary, p. 223. for he touches the same strings over and over.

his approbation and acceptance: nevertheless this might not be by his own hand, but by the hand of his servants, as it is common in all languages to attribute to men these punishments which others inflict by their order, as well as those which themselves are the immediate instruments of. Be it, that there was an altar erected to the Lord in Gilgal, the place of Agag's death, 1 Sam. xi. 15. will it follow he was offered upon it, though no sacrificial term at all be introduced in the account of his fate? It were ridiculous to pretend it. Withal, it is to be remarked, there was no capitulation, as this denotes an assurance of life to Agag upon his surrender; for what room for this, when he did not come into Saul's hand voluntarily, but was a mere prisoner of war? Nor indeed could Saul have made any promise of that nature which would have been binding, since it would have been in opposition to God's command.

It remains only to take notice of what our author subjoins about Ezekiel; but what a proof is it of his strong inclination to traduce the Jewish people without any ground, as much as a careless reader may be profelyted to his opinion by the sound of the quotation! It appears that the prophet in the passage recited, (which however is to be found not in Ezek. xxxix. 49. but xxxix. 17.) introduces God commanding him to address, not the Jews, but the carnivorous birds of the air, and ravenous beasts of the field, and to invite them to a plentiful entertainment, after foretelling the overthrow of Gog's immense army in the land of Israel, ' Speak thou son of man, unto every feathered fowl, and to every

‘beast of the field, Assemble, assemble yourselves
 ‘and come, gather yourselves on every side to my
 ‘sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great
 ‘sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may
 ‘eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat of the flesh
 ‘of the mighty, and drink of the blood of the prin-
 ‘ces of the earth.—Thus ye shall be filled at my
 ‘table with horses and chariots, with mighty men,
 ‘and with all men of war, saith the Lord God. And
 ‘I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the
 ‘heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed,
 ‘and my hand that I have laid upon them.’ How
 strange malice to call this a promise that the Jews
 should feast upon human flesh? How unaccountable
 perverseness to alledge it as an evidence they took
 delight in human sacrifices?

S E C T I O N VIII.

Of his affirming that the Jews immolated thirty-two
 Midianite maids; and his throwing out several
 aspersions upon Joshua, in the thirty-sixth chap-
 ter of the Philosophy of History. Where also his
 insinuation against Rahab, as if she had assisted the
 Jews to surprise Jericho, and his reflection that
 human sacrifices were rarely practised among the
 nations, in other treatises, are occasionally ani-
 madverted on.

IN the same page † of his Philosophy of History, Mr.
 Voltaire represents ‘the Pentateuch to tell us, that
 thirty-two of these Midianite maids, whom they saved

† Page 172.

alive, were immolated.' The same thing he has intimated in his Treatise on Toleration†, but more cautiously, 'Several commentators will have it that thirty-two of the young women were sacrificed to the Lord.' 'The Lord's tribute was thirty and two persons,' Numb. xxxi. 40.

But as I know no commentators who have given this interpretation, so nothing can be more injurious to the sacred historian than to affirm, that these thirty-two maids were immolated, whether he means by this phrase that they were sacrificed to the Lord, or that they were put to death in any different form. It is true the Lord spake unto Moses, Numb. xxxi. 15. saying, 'Levy a tribute unto the Lord of the persons that constitute or compose the prey which belongs to them that went out to the battle, and give it unto Eleazar the priest, for an heave-offering unto the Lord.' And, in pursuance of this order, the historian informs, that of the 16000 virgins which were their portion that took the war upon them, the Lord's tribute was thirty and two: and that they were given, as the Lord's heave-offering, unto Eleazar the priest. But it does not follow they were slain as sacrifices. At this rate it behoved us to maintain, that the threescore and one asses, which were the Lord's tribute from the thirty thousand and five hundred of these animals that fell to the men of war as their half of this article in the booty, were also offered as sacrifices to Jehovah, because they were likewise given to Eleazar as the Lord's heave-offering, according to the divine commandment unto Moses, in the same manner as the thirty and two maids were

† Chap. 12. page 166.

given him: but how absurd this, since asses were unclean creatures, which could not be presented on God's altar at all? wherefore their firstlings were to be redeemed, Exod. xiii. 13. and Numb. xviii. 15. Nor does it even follow they were to be put to death in a different shape, for things are said to be a *תרומה* *terumah* or heave-offering, which had no life to lose, as the first cake of their dough, and the first corn of the threshing-floor, Numb. xv. 19. and the like. Moreover, heave-offerings were things and persons bestowed by God upon the priests, for the sustenance and comfort of themselves and their families, amidst the discharge of their sacred office. See Numb. xviii. 12—26. and Nehem, x. 35. xiii. 5. in which two last passages, the word *תרומה* *terumoth*, translated, the offerings of the priests, should have been, strictly turned, their heave-offerings; as again, it appears they were things deposited and lodged in certain chambers about the temple for their use. Here then we are just to understand, that the Midianite girls were consecrated to the service of the sacerdotal order in their functions about the tabernacle. For thus they were an heave-offering to the Lord, as the Levites were a wave-offering to him, when devoted and separated to its ministry in their province, Numb. viii. 11. So ill founded is our author's assertion that they were immolated.*

* Mr. Voltaire, just before the words here quoted from his Philosophy of History, concerning the fate of these maids, calls this country of Midian, where the Israelites are said to have found 675000 sheep, 72000 oxen, 61000 asses, and 32000 virgins, 'a little country, which contains about nine square leagues,' with an evident design to persuade his readers, that it was impossible so prodigious a booty should be met with there, and thence to destroy the credit of the sa-

In the next page †, but the same chapter still, he writes, ‘ That Joshua made all the inhabitants of Je-
 ‘ richo perish in the flames.’ Is not this, however,

cred history. But upon what authority doth he fix the dimensions of the country, against the inhabitants of which the Israelites, under Moses, now waged war, in the manner he hath done? Midian, in the larger sense, seems to have reached from the coast of the Red sea to the river Arnon, on the east of the Dead sea, or Asphaltic lake, as was observed already. Accordingly Josephus places the Midian where Jethro dwelt, and to which Moses retired when Pharaoh sought to slay him, Exod. ii. 13. on the border of the Red sea. Antiq. 2. 11. 1. *Ες τε πολιν Μαδινην αφικομενος, προς τη μεν ερυθρα θαλασση κει-
 μινην, &c.* But surely Midian, in this sense, which ought to have been Mr. Voltaire’s, from his assigning Jethro a residence in it, as will be seen immediately as well as the people by Arnon, was a country which contained many more than nine square leagues; for so many are in a country which is only three leagues, or nine miles broad, and three leagues, or nine miles long, but the length and breadth of this far exceeded. Even in the narrower acceptation again, which, I believe, is that of the term Midian in Numbers, it surpassed these dimensions he hath given it more than a little. Suitably, we find it was divided into a kind of pentarchy then, or comprehended five kingdoms; for so many kings of Midian are recorded to have been slain in the war, Numb. xxxi. 8. Joshua, xiii. 21. He subjoins also to the passage recited, this reflection, ‘ The remarkable part of this acknowledgment is, that this
 ‘ same Moses was a kinsman of Jethro, the high priest of the Midian-
 ‘ ites, who had done him the most signal services, and heaped kind-
 ‘ nesses upon him.’ And thus he would insinuate, that in the severe treatment of the Midianites, Moses acted against all the ties of gratitude and natural affection. But besides that Moses, in the havock Israel made among the Midianites, was only the executioner of a divine order, which, wherever it is interposed, supercedes all private obligations to tenderness, let it be observed there was no such near connection between Jethro, whose daughter Moses had married, and these northern Midianites, that is, these inhabitants of Midian in the more

† Philosophy of History, page 173.

in flat contradiction to Scripture, which relates that the Israelites utterly destroyed all living in the city, except Rahab and her friends, with the edge of the sword? Josh. vi. 21. It is true it is said afterwards they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; but this must be understood, not with respect to the inhabitants, of whom it is already affirmed they were slain, but with respect to the houses and furniture, under the restriction mentioned, ver. 24, 25. Accordingly himself, in his Dialogues†, says, ‘The Jews put all to the sword in Jericho, having previously devoted them to destruction, except Rahab a harlot, who had assisted them in surprising the town.’ Yet even here, where he states the fact aright, how

confined meaning of the word, with whom the Israelites fought, as our author would lead us to suppose. It is true both dwelt in that region which bore the general name of Midian; but then this region was an immense tract of land, in which were several principalities or sovereignties, with separate, and, no doubt, sometimes jarring interests. It may be true also, that the progenitor of the southern Midianites, in the neighbourhood of the Red sea, among whom Jethro presided in sacred, or as others, from a different version of the title of his office, think, in civil matters, and the progenitor of the northern Midianites, whom the Israelites destroyed, was the same person, even Midian, a son of Abraham by Keturah, as from him the whole territory had its denomination. This union, however, in Midian, as their common father, as it was a thing which took place about 400 years before, would, by this time, have lost all influence upon their mutual conduct, or reciprocal behaviour toward each other.—Jethro and the people, whose priest or ruler he was, were at a great distance from the Midianites that were subdued by Israel under Moses; and remote as they were from them in respect of their seat or habitation, they were no less removed from them, as was shewed before, in their religious sentiments. See section V. of this chapter, page 127.

† Page 58.

unfair is he in describing Rahab's service? For one would imagine from his expression, that she had intoxicated the centinels, thereby disabling them to sound an alarm, or that she had bribed them to suffer their enemies advances without giving any signal of danger, or that she had received up some of the Israelite foes at the back windows of her house, which seems to have been contiguous to the wall of the town, or that she had in some other base manner contributed to their becoming masters of the place. The case, however, was far otherwise. She had indeed concealed two spies whom Joshua had made choice of to go and examine the condition of the people in the land, and secured their escape to the camp of the Hebrews, which was still beyond the Jordan, against all the attempts of the king's searchers to intercept and seize them: but then their getting possession of the city was not by any aid from her, but altogether miraculous. For at the circumvection of the ark the seventh time, on the seventh day, while the princes sounded with rams horns, as had been done once during each of the preceding six days, and the besiegers gave an universal shout, the city wall fell, so that every man entered at the breach which was next before him. See Joshua, ii. and vi. chapters.

He further adds, in his Philosophy of History †, 'That Joshua devoted to death 12000 inhabitants of the city of Ai.' But I do not read of any vow of their destruction at all, which must be the sense of devoting as his act. And though he had bound himself and his people thus to their excision, there would have been no sufficient ground for thinking it pro-

† Page 173.

ceeded from a vindictive temper, or from the rage and hatred of an enemy. It might have been employed from a pious principle, as an additional security, amidst the reluctancies of nature, for their fulfillment of God's general order with reference to the seven nations, upon their non-acceptance of their offers of peace, which was above in its substance produced, and to his particular charge in this instance, Josh. viii. 2. even as we suppose him actuated by this motive in devoting Jericho, vi. 17. All that Joshua did in this case, was only to declare the divine pleasure to the army, as a subaltern officer carries to his corps the mandate and direction of the commander in chief, in consequence of which, all the people of Ai were cut off, even 12000, Josh. viii. 25, 27.

Mr. Voltaire subjoins still another charge † against him, 'He sacrificed to the Lord thirty and two kings of the country, who were all anathematized and hanged.' And he renews it in these terms, chap. 41. † where indeed, as appears from Josh. xii. 24. he gives a juster account of the number of kings that lost their lives by his means, 'He hanged up thirty kings, and one of the principal burgeses, who had dared to defend their firesides, their wives, and their children.' Of this explication I cannot however make any sense, unless we read thirty-one principal burgeses, as to be sure these kings could not have authority over any extensive district; which Mr. Voltaire himself owns to have been the case with kings in ancient times: for in this same treatise, speaking of the Romans, he says, 'Their territories, in the time of

‡ Page 173.

† Page 192, 193.

‘ their kings and first consuls, were not so extensive
 ‘ as those of Ragusa. We must not, by the title of
 ‘ king, understand a monarch such as Cyrus and his
 ‘ successors.’ And how useful would it be to recollect this when persons read of several kings in a small country in Scripture! But why does he say so many kings of Canaan were anathematized and hanged by him, as thirty-one? In the Bible it is only said concerning six of them, that he hanged them on trees; of the rest it is affirmed, that he smote them and slew them with the edge of the sword. Nor were any of them all anathematized by him, that is, devoted to death by any vow or curse on his part, so far as we know, except the king of Jericho, though they were all subjected to lose their lives. Why farther does he say, they were sacrificed to the Lord by him? Though they were destroyed in obedience to his command, they were not laid as victims upon his altar. It was shewed before, that such human sacrifices to him were most strictly prohibited, Deut. xii. 29, 31. with which also xviii. 10. may be compared; and there is not one phrase in the narrative which authorizes to conclude, that the effusion of their blood and extinction of their life was considered in this light. I may even produce Voltaire † against himself here, for in another work he asserts, ‘ Jephtha’s daughter and
 ‘ king Agag, are the only two human sacrifices we
 ‘ meet with among the Jews,’ which should be remembered whenever he speaks, as in the passage under consideration, of more of our species being sacrificed by them; there being a plain inconsistency here. Should any in his defence say, his meaning is, that

† Philosophical Dictionary, article Religion, page 320.

these two only of the Jewish nation were sacrificed, wherefore he might, without incurring any charge of self-contradiction, represent the Canaanites to have been sacrificed by Joshua here, as he does afterwards the Gibeonites to have been sacrificed by David, they forget that, according to this sense of the expression, Agag could not be called a sacrifice among the Jews at all, because he was a foreigner as well as those kings of Canaan, for he was king of the Amalekites.

Whereas, however, he adds in the work* referred to, ‘ Human sacrifices have been introduced almost among all nations, but very rarely were they practised.—The Grecian story of Iphigenia is not thoroughly verified. Human sacrifices are very rarely heard of among the Romans. In a word, very little blood has the Pagan religion shed,’ it may not be improper to observe, that this account seems to be far from a just representation of the fact. It will be found on the contrary, that there was much effusion of blood this way. He himself writes elsewhere in the same† piece, ‘ At Hierapolis in Egypt, Porphyry tells us it was nothing extraordinary to sacrifice men. In Tauris strangers were sacrificed, but this savage custom being known, the priests of Tauris, it is to be supposed, did not much business. This execrable superstition prevailed among the antient Greeks, the Cypriots, the Phoenicians, the Tyrians, and the Carthaginians. The Romans themselves gave into this religious guilt, and according to Plutarch, sacrificed two Greeks and two Gauls, to ex-

* Philos. Diction. *ibid.* 320.

† *Ibid.* Articles Idol, Idolater, &c. p. 222.

' piate the incontinence of three vestals. Procopius,
 ' who was cotemporary with Theodobert king of the
 ' Franks, says that the Franks sacrificed men, on their
 ' entrance into Italy under that prince. These hor-
 ' rid sacrifices were common among the Gauls and
 ' Germans.' And yet even here, where he is more
 full and particular, he does not at all give his readers
 an adequate view of the prevalence of human vic-
 tims in the heathen world, and of the quantity of
 human blood thereby shed. He makes Porphyry on-
 ly tell us, that it was nothing extraordinary to sa-
 crifice men in Egypt; but that philosopher informs
 us from Manetho, that there three men were sacri-
 ficed every day to Juno, if * Eusebius understood
 him aright. Again, he leads to think, that none were
 sacrificed in Tauris but strangers that appeared there
 of choice, who he rightly supposes would be very
 few, after the barbarous custom was known, the
 love of life being natural to every man; but it is cer-
 tain it was also the fate of such as were shipwreck-
 ed on their coast, or forced to take shelter there
 through any misfortune.—He omits further in his
 catalogue, many nations who practised this cruel
 mode of worship, as the Rhodians, the inhabitants
 of the islands Chios and Tenedos, the Lesbians, the
 Ionians, the Syrians in Laodicea, the Dumatians in
 Arabia, the Indians, the Arcadians, the Albanians,
 the Thracians, the Scythians, the Britons, &c. Fi-
 nally, he neither shews us the measure of frequency
 with which human sacrifices were offered by the
 people among whom he owns they obtained, nor

* Praep. Evang. 4. 16. throughout. Clem. Alexand. Protrepti-
 con, five Exhort. ad Gentes, p. 27.

what number of victims were brought by them to the altar. Nevertheless, it is plain from the most clear testimonies concerning some nations, and probable from the manner of expression which is used about the practice of others, where such human victims were introduced, that they immolated them once every year on the return of these different anniversary festivals, which their various superstition had thus dreadfully consecrated.—That in several places, more persons than one, without exception of the most innocent age or the most elevated rank, had life destroyed by a public standing ordinance or law on the horrid solemnity,—and that in times of general danger or distress, through war, pestilence, or similar cause, great multitudes were slain by some nations, to avert and appease the anger of their deities. So we read, that the Carthaginians, when they were besieged by Agathocles tyrant of Sicily, about 315 years before Christ, sacrificed two hundred of their most distinguished and illustrious, and thereafter an equal or superior number of their meaner and † poorer youth. Even among the Romans, it was an ancient custom to throw thirty men bound hand and foot into the Tiber, as a sacrifice to Saturn, though in room hereof was sub-

† Ibid. and Diodorus Siculus, &c. By an ancient law, they were enjoined to sacrifice to Saturn, only children of noble birth; but for some time past, they had been accustomed to substitute in their room children of mean parentage, secretly bought and educated for that purpose; so ineffectual had Gelo of Sicily's treaty been, who made it a term or condition of granting them peace more than an hundred years before, that they should abstain from offering human sacrifices,—and now, to make atonement for this crime, they presented that immense number of victims. See Plutarch. *Apophthegms*.

stituted afterwards, the annual ceremony of casting so many images of men in the same dress or habit, into the stream of that river, about the time of half-moon in the month of May, which Dionysius † of Halicarnass, who flourished in the reign of Augustus, and † Plutarch, who lived so late as 150 years after Christ, both report to have been still observed in their days.

—The sacrifice, moreover, of two Greeks and two Gauls was not offered merely once by them, as one would be led to imagine from our author's words, but renewed year after year from the era of the pollution of these vestal virgins, (whether they were three according to Plutarch, or two according to Livy, is not very material,) and of the public calamities which succeeded it, till a century and a half after our Saviour's birth was past, as appears by the same * Plutarch's telling us, that such persons were buried alive in the ox-market, during the month of November, in his time.—There was also a man sacrificed every year in Rome on the festival of Jupiter Latiaris, so late as the age of Porphyry † and Lactantius, if we may credit the accounts by them, and other intermediate or cotemporary writers, not now to insist on the sacrifices offered by the Romans, as well as by others, to the infernal gods, upon funeral occasions. Indeed it is observable, that Pallas who wrote about the mysteries of Mithras, as cited by Porphyry in a

† Dionys. Halic. apud Euseb. Præp. Evang. 4. 16. Plutarch. Rom. Quæstion. vol. 2. p. 285.

* In Marcello, tom. 1. p. 299. and Rom. Quæst. vol. 2. p. 283.

† Porphyry's testimony, who wrote about A. C. 253. may be seen in Eusebius *ibid.* and Lactantius's, who flourished about A. C. 304. may be seen in his Treatise, 'De falsa Religione,' 1. 21.

passage preserved † by Eusebius, does not say that human sacrifices were altogether, but only that they were almost abolished among all men under Adrian the emperor, tho' this prince died so late as the 138th year of the Christian era. For this reason, together with the instances abovementioned of human sacrifices of a more recent date within the Roman empire, I conclude, that the decree of the senate of Rome said by § Pliny to have been enacted A. U. 657, (which was almost an hundred years prior to the appearance of Jesus,) that no man should be immolated or sacrificed, though it may have been real, must have been ineffectual to restrain and suppress wholly the savage and barbarous custom. The entire abolition of them therefore, was not owing to mere civilization, as Mr. Voltaire in his *Treatise on * Toleration*, and others of his turn, would persuade us, but to the influence and progress of Christianity in the world, since it is manifest they were practised among the Romans in their most improved and polished state, till this religion quite extirpated them.—But to give a more minute history of the prevalence of human sacrifices, to produce the ancient authorities by which their great spread, and number, and frequency might be supported, to fix the period of their total disuse and cessation, even in countries of more refined manners, and to evince our obligations to the gospel, for putting end to a rite so shocking and so pernicious,

† Praep. Evang. ibid.

§ Pliny Nat. Hist. lib. 30. cap. 1. p. 545.

* Chap. 12. p. 172. 'Men laid them aside only in proportion as they became civilized. So true is it, that civilization is the nurse of humanity.'

would afford abundant matter for a pretty long dissertation. The reader then must at present be satisfied with these short remarks, for proving that our author diminishes too much, when he speaks of their being rarely practised, and of very little blood's being shed by the pagan religion, and that the world owes more to the light of the gospel, on account of their banishment out of it, than many of its enemies and contemners are willing to allow.

SECTION IX.

Of his calling the Jews one of the most modern nations, and his argument in support of it from 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20. together with his saying, that Saul swore he would sacrifice to the Lord him that should eat during the conflict with the Philistines, in the thirty-eighth chapter of his Philosophy of History.

LET us next take notice of some misrepresentations in his thirty-eighth chapter. Speaking† of the Jews, he says, ‘ This is one of the most modern nations, considering them as other people, only from the time they formed a settlement and possessed a capital. They seem to be considered by their neighbours only in the time of Solomon, which was nearly about Hesiod and Homer, and the first Archons of Athens.’

But to omit observing, that Sir Isaac Newton places Solomon's reign nigh 150 years before Hesiod flourished, and 115 years before Troy was taken,

† Phil. of Hist. page 181.

which makes it much more antient; it is far from being true, that the Jews began then only to be considered by their neighbours. For what was the embassy from Hiram king of Tyre, to congratulate Solomon on his accession to the throne, but the effect of his alliance with his father David, 1 Kings, vi. 1? and do not we read of David's victories over the Philistines, and Moabites, and Edomites, and Hadadezer king of Zobah, and the Syrians of Damascus who came to succour him, whereon Toi king of Hamath sent Joram his son to salute him, because this Hadadezer was also his enemy? nay, how could they fail to be regarded by their neighbours sooner than David's time, since we read of their frequent wars with some of them, long before his advancement to the throne? it is true, it was seven years after his elevation to the kingdom, ere they became finally possessed of Jerusalem, and the strong hold of Zion: but it by no means follows from this, that they had no capital; much less that they were altogether overlooked by the nations on their borders, when their own history declares the contrary, which ought to be the more credible, that they have not made these absurd claims, and ridiculous pretensions to extravagant antiquity, which some other nations have vainly done.

He says * also, ' The Jews before Saul, appeared only like a band of Arabs of the desert, of so little power, that the Phenicians treated them nearly in the same manner as the Lacedaemonians treated the Ilotes. These were slaves who were not allowed arms, they had not the privilege of forging iron,

* Phil. of Hist. p. 181.

‘ nor even to sharpen their plough-shares, and the
 ‘ edge of their hatchets. This is set forth by the Jews
 ‘ in the book of Samuel, and they add, that they
 ‘ had neither sword nor javelin, in the battle which
 ‘ Saul and Jonathan gave at Bethaven against the
 ‘ Phenicians or Philistines, an action in which it is
 ‘ related of Saul, that he made an oath of sacrificing
 ‘ to the Lord him that should eat during the con-
 ‘ flict.’ To the same purpose, in his Dialogues, speak-
 ing of the first king of Israel, ‘ This king could not
 ‘ possibly be powerful, for in the first battle which
 ‘ the Jews under his command fought with the Phi-
 ‘ listines† their masters, they had neither sword nor
 ‘ spear, nor a single weapon of iron.’

But is all this according to truth? how could the
 Philistines look upon the Jews as a band of wild A-
 rabs, when they had been settled in their neighbour-
 hood about three hundred years? for so long must
 the period have been, between their entrance into
 the land of Canaan in Joshua’s time, and Saul’s in-
 vestiture with the kingdom. They had indeed been
 permitted by providence to prevail against them, in
 punishment of their wickedness, and they had im-
 proved this advantage, to disable them from giving
 them any future molestation, by stripping them of
 their arms, as their enemies appear also to have done
 before, Judges, v. 8. and by removing their artifi-
 cers who might supply them with others. So says
 the historian, ‘ There was no smith found through-
 ‘ out all the land of Israel, for they (their conquerors)
 ‘ said, lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears,
 ‘ wherefore all the Israelites went down to the Phi-

† Pages 59, 60.

‘liffines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his ax, and his mattock,’ 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20. by which we must understand perhaps, that they repaired to their strong-holds in the land of Israel, rather than to their dwellings in their own country, this being too remote for the resort of the natives of the other in these necessities, which would occur every day. Nevertheless, that they were reduced to so naked and defenceless a state, is no proof that they were not a respectable nation. It is rather an argument, that by their valour and bravery they were very formidable; for why otherwise would they have taken such precaution against their shaking off their yoke? in the same way it deserves attention, did the Chaldeans long after carry away all the smiths to Babylon out of the land, that there might be less danger of their revolt who continued in it, when certainly the Jews had been long above contempt, 2 Kings, xxiv. 14. And does not Pliny * in his Natural History tell us, that Porcenna king of Etruria, imposed upon the old Romans this condition in his treaty with them, after the expulsion of the Tarquins, ‘that they should use no iron at all but for tilling the ground?’ farther, it is not true, that they had neither sword, nor spear, nor weapon of iron, in this battle with the Philistines; for it is expressly recorded, that Saul and Jonathan were armed with sword and spear: and though we should allow that the people, among whom neither of them was found that day, means the whole people, instead of the six

* Lib. 34. cap. 14. Victor. edit. p. 616. ‘In foedere, quod, ex-
t pulsis regibus, populo Romano dedit Porcenna, nominatim compre-
hendit inveniunt, ne ferro, nisi in agricultura, uterentur.’

hundred men with Saul, who are mentioned, 1 Sam. xiii. 15. (as unlikely as it is, that none of the nation would conceal their arms, amidst the attempt to bereave them thereof, and that none in more distant parts from the Philistines, would procure them by money from the Syrians and others on their borders, before this engagement,) still it is plain, they were far from being without a single weapon of iron. For they had tools for domestic or rural uses, which were made thereof, even coulters, shares, mattocks, axes, forks, and goads, as they had also left a file to sharpen them. And might they not gain a victory over the Philistines, through the blessing of heaven, when furnished with such instruments, together with flails, clubs, staves, (some of which they might harden in the * fire,) and likewise slings, bows and arrows, at managing which, we read the men of Gibeah were very dextrous, long before this, Judges, xx. 16?

As to Saul's making an oath, that he would sacrifice to the Lord him that should eat during the conflict, he did indeed doom to destruction whoever should taste any food until the evening, (probably upon seeing the confusion and flight of the Philistines that no time might be lost from their pursuit and slaughter, in care of refreshment, 1 Sam. xiv. 24.) and herein he acted a part very imprudent, and un-

* This was the manner in ancient times; whence Virgil speaking of the Trojan youth, says,

— Non jam certamine agresti.

‘ Stipitibus duris agitur, sudibusve praeclustis,

‘ Sed ferro ancipiti decernunt. —

And Quintus Curtius 3. 2. giving an account of the armour of the Derbices in Darius's army, says, ‘ Quidam lignum igni daraverant.’

worthy of a wise captain, for the people became unable to follow with speed, their strength being spent through long abstinence from meat; but that he made an oath to sacrifice to the Lord whoever should eat before night, is not asserted by the historian at all, nor is there any shadow for the imputation on Saul, unless one will maintain, that whenever a man makes a foolish inconsiderate vow to cut off another upon some offensive behaviour, he vows to sacrifice him to the Lord, which were most glaringly absurd and ridiculous.

SECTION X.

Of his making Moses sacrifice 24000 men of his nation under pretence that a Jew had been found lying with a Midianite, in chapter fortieth of the same work.

I FORBEAR to remark upon any accounts in the thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters of his Philosophy of History, except one; where, after mentioning Moses's obligations to Jethro, high priest of Midian, and his intermarriage with his daughter, he thus exclaims†, 'What cruelty, contrary to all policy, (to judge according to our feeble notions) must Moses have been guilty of, to sacrifice 24000 men of his own nation, under pretence that a Jew had been found lying with a Midianite? and how can it be said, after such astonishing butchery, that Moses was the most gentle of all men?' In his Treatise on Toleration, he had swelled them to 80000,

† Page 187.

saying,† ‘Many start difficulties concerning the 80000
 ‘Israelites who were slain by order of Moses to atone
 ‘for the crime of a single one of them, for being sur-
 ‘prised with a Moabite woman.’ Here, however, he
 hath reduced them to almost one fourth of that num-
 ber; and so far his account of the fact is agreeable
 to Scripture.

But is his representation of it, in other respects,
 just? Far from it. According to the Sacred History,
 it was God himself who destroyed these men, Num.
 xxv. 9. ‘And those that died in the plague*, were
 ‘twenty and four thousand.’ Nor was this calamity
 sent, as he pretends, on account of a Jew’s lying
 with a Midianitish woman; for Phinehas’s act of zeal
 in following them into the tent, and thrusting them
 through, amidst their commission of the crime, was
 the mean of stopping its devastation, Numb. xxv. 7.
 Pf. cvi. 30. On the contrary, it appears to have
 been inflicted ere this wickedness was perpetrated,
 for the whoredom of the people with the daughters
 of Moab, their resort unto the sacrifices of their gods,
 and their worship of Baal-peor their idol, Numb. xxv.
 1, 2, 3. Deut. iv. 3. Josh. xxii. 17. Suitably, there-
 fore, we find, all the assembly of the children of Israel
 were weeping before the door of the tabernacle for
 the great loss of lives by it, when these persons, Zim-
 ri and Cozbi, went in to gratify their lust; which,

† Chapter 12. page 154.

* It is the same word which occurs, Numb. xi. 33. xiii. 37. xvi.
 48. and is in all these places translated *plague*; and so Josephus un-
 derstood it here, Ερραρησαν δε πατις και λοιμω, ταυτην ιστορη-
 ψαντος αυτοις τε Θεω την ιστοριαν.

together with the notoriety and openness of it, was a great aggravation of the sin.

It is true, we are told, that upon the people's practising these enormities, Moses gave this order to the judges of Israel, 'Slay ye every one his men, that were joined unto Baal-peor,' Numb. xxv. 5. in pursuance of a direction to him from the Lord, whose anger was kindled against Israel. But about the import, nay, about the very tenor of this direction from God, there is no small diversity of opinions. Even they who read the fourth verse as our translators, 'The Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before * the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel,' explain it variously. For some of them understand God's intention to be, that Moses should gibbet all the chiefs of the congregation, because they had been guilty with greater aggravation; after putting them to death, namely, which the law, Deut. xxi. 22. required previously to be done, whenever any man was to be suspended on a tree. And some of them make God only to signify, that he should erect a court of judicature†, consisting of all the heads of their families, and, by their intervention, hang indiscriminately those that had been offenders in the matter of Peor; upon which he gave unto them the charge above recited,

* It is, according to the original, 'Hang them up to the Lord,' as in 2 Sam. xxi. 6. in vindication of his honour whom they have despised, in demonstration of his justice whom they have affronted, So Raschi explains it in that place.

† This is the sense adopted by the Targum of Onkelos, Rabbi Solomon, Fagius, and others.

of slaying every one his men, that were joined unto that idol. Nor do these who espouse this last interpretation, fail to urge some specious arguments in its behalf. For say they, it is not probable that the heads were all delinquents, either by actual debauchery and idolatry, or by shameful negligence and remissness in their station to prevent the same; which yet the former gloss supposes. And further, if these heads or princes among the people were all criminal, what judges could Moses find who would be avengers of the enormity?—However, others again, with Houbigant†, contend that the text should be amended by the help of the Samaritan thus, ‘The Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and let them kill every man, (in his own province and jurisdiction, viz.) those that have been joined to Baal-peor, and hang them up before the Lord.’ But whatever may have been the precise form and true scope of the divine injunction to Moses on this occasion, by which he was led to call the judges to slay every one the apostates or rebellious under his

† Though Houbigant plead, in support of this emendation, that hereby Moses does not order the princes to be hanged, but the guilty; nor even these to be hanged alive, which was contrary to the statute of God, and to the custom of the Hebrews, (since they killed persons ere they hanged them up) yet it appears too bold and licentious, as our reading of the Hebrew text is confirmed by all MSS. which have been examined hitherto, and all versions, except the Samaritan. This indeed hath, ‘The Lord said unto Moses, Command that they kill every man, those that have been joined to Baal-peor, and hang them up,’ thus substituting another clause instead of ‘Take all the heads of the people.’ And from this, and the Hebrew blended together, that learned man frames his text here, which I have translated as above.

own authority, there is no evidence at all from the Bible, that any of them proceeded to obey it. I confess Josephus † makes many to have been slain by the valour of some virtuous young men, who were stimulated with zeal from Phinehas's example, as well as by the plague; and Philo § mentions no other cause but that of the destruction that happened, though he makes the number of them that perished the same as the Scripture does. But what credit and deference are due to them, in comparison of the author of the sacred book, which, according to all copies and versions, represents so many to have died by the plague? How disingenuous then in Mr. Voltaire to say, that Moses sacrificed 24000 * men of his own nation up-

† Antiq. 4. 6. 12.

§ De Vita Mosi, lib. 1. page 648, 649. edit. Paris.

* I am aware that several Christian commentators have thought a thousand were slain by the judges at Moses's command, and that only 23000 fell by the hand of God, that they might vindicate Paul's account of the punishment which God sent on the Israelites for their lewdness, 1 Cor. x. 8. as consistent with the history here. But as Moses is express that 24000 died of the plague, according to all Hebrew MSS. and all ancient versions, it seems beyond controversy more eligible to allow, that an error hath crept into the Apostle's text, since Occumenius, who flourished about the year 950, tells us some copies of the Epistle in his time, read 24000; or to suppose, with Alberti, in his *Observationes Criticae in N. Testamentum*, that Paul gives us only the number that fell in one day, which he might learn by tradition, as he did the names of the magicians Jannes and Jambres, for his words run thus, 'Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell 'in one day three and twenty thousand,' while Moses gives us the sum total of all that perished by the plague. Nor is it difficult to conceive, that the judges might delay the execution of the order, intimidated by the number of the transgressors, and the distinguished figure and rank of some of them. Such pusillanimity hath been often incident to magistrates.

on this occasion, and that he did it under pretence of a Jew's lying with a Midianite woman? Nevertheless, he hath not been ashamed to repeat the falsehood since, in his Philosophical Dictionary, as an objection of learned men to Moses's being author of the Pentateuch; 'You farther tell†us, that another time you ordered 24000 of your poor followers to be massacred, because one of them had lain with a Midianite.' At the same time it may be observed, it is rather suited to be an objection, like many others introduced with it, to the credibility of the history, than to its genuineness, that is, to its being worthy of belief, rather than to its having him for the writer. But the truth is, it is of no force at all, either to disprove the one or the other.

SECTION XI.

Of misrepresentations in his forty-first chapter, relating to the passage of the Jordan, and to the plea of the Jews about their right to Canaan.

LET us now look into his forty-first chapter. Here are many passages which demand our animadversion. I take them in the order in which they appear there. 'I do not†, says he, endeavour to discover why Jo-

For as to that solution, that there were a thousand persons of station, and twenty-three thousand of the common people, and that the apostle speaks of the loss of lives among them only, as much as it would have served to make the judgment more awful and influential, to take notice that no worldly wealth or grandeur were a sanctuary and protection from ruin by it, it seems very untenable.

† Article Moses, page 293.

† Page 191.

* Joshua or Josuah, captain of the Jews, in making his
 * tribe * pass from the east of Jordan to the west, to-
 * wards Jericho, should want God to suspend the
 * course of this river, which is not, at that place,
 * forty feet wide, when it was so easy to throw a
 * wooden bridge over, and when it was still more
 * easy to ford it. There were several fords to this ri-
 * ver, which is proved by the Israelites slaying at one
 * of them the 42000 Israelites, who could not pro-
 * nounce the word *Shiboleth*.*

But does the history make Joshua at all solicit.
 God's miraculous interposition here? or shew him
 filled with anxiety how he with his army should pass
 the Jordan? No. It represents God to have assured
 him, without any importunity on his part, that as
 soon as the soles of the priests feet, who were di-
 rected to bear the ark of the covenant at the distance
 of about 2000 † cubits before, should be dipped in
 the brim of the waters of Jordan, the waters coming
 down from the head should be suspended or stopped,
 while the waters below should run down their bed,
 toward the Dead sea, and that the ground should
 hereby be left dry for their passage, that they might
 know their God was the living God, and be con-
 vinced he would make good his promise of driving

* It is well he does not here repeat the polite name of *his herd*, which
 he had before bestowed on them, chap. 40. page 173. * The same
 * book tells us that Joshua, the son of Nun, having passed the river
 * Jordan with his *herd*, dry footed, &c.

† By so great an interstice between the ark and the first line of
 the camp as this, which makes more than 3000 feet, or 1000 yards,
 the whole host might perhaps see the miracle before they entered the
 Jordan, from the neighbouring hills.

out their enemies; as indeed, upon its happening, it could not fail to spread terror among them. See Joshua, iii. 7, &c.

Again, why does he call the river at the place of passage, 'only forty feet wide, so that it was easy to throw a wooden bridge over it'? To pass the more general * accounts of ancient writers, Adamnano, an author of the seventh century, says, 'It was the breadth of a stone's cast from a sling,' as he is cited by Reland†. Maundrel, who travelled into the East in the year 1697, and is in universal credit, makes its breadth in the neighbourhood of Jericho, from which it was almost † eight miles distant, about sixty feet, or twenty yards, while, at the same time, he describes its rapidity so great, that none could swim against it. Dr. Shaw again, in later times, gives it thirty yards in breadth, and remarks its depth to be three feet at the very brink. While Poscock, in his travels, satisfies himself with calling its breadth much the same with that of the Thames at Windsor. Besides, whatever was its natural breadth, it was, when the Israelites needed to pass it, much increased beyond its common magnitude, for it overflowed all

* Strabo Geogr. chap. 16. page 755. (edit. Almelov. 1095.) gives it the appellation of *the greatest* river. But it seems to be upon comparison only with the rivers of that country. Wherefore we cannot form any conclusion from it, till we know their dimensions. There is more force in Pliny's description, that it was 'Amnis ambitiosus, &c.' 'A river which spread much wherever the situation of the ground did allow it.' Nat. Hist. 5. 15.

† Reland. Palæst. lib. 1. chap. 43. page 278. Compare also Univ. Hist. chap. 2. page 430.

‡ Joseph. de Bello, 5. 4.

its banks, it being then the first month Abib ||, or barley harvest, at which season it annually rose without the bounds of its channel, through the melting of the snow in the neighbouring mountains, especially in Lebanon, at the foot of which was its source or fountain, and through the early rains which at that time fell. Compare Josh. iv. 18, 19. 1 Chron. xii. 15. Jerem. xlix. 19. l. 44. and Ecclesiasticus, xxiv. 29. Nor is this fact to be denied, or even doubted, because we do not hear of its overflowing now. This may be owing to its having wrought itself a deeper bed, or † to its having acquired a broader

|| That Jordan swelled in this month, is certain; for it is expressly remarked, that the people came up out of Jordan (which had been before observed to have overflowed all its banks, Josh. iii. 15. iv. 18.) on the tenth day of the first month, iv. 19. And, in 1 Chron. xii. 15. to enhance the valour of the sons of Gad, it is said, 'These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its banks, and put to flight them of the vallies.' It appears therefore very strange, that the anonymous author of a Dissertation in *Masson's Histoire Critique de la Republique des Lettres*, tom. 2. page 215. should have contended for translating the words, which we turn 'Jordan overfloweth its banks all the time of the harvest,' 'Jordan overfloweth its banks after harvest,' since there is so clear evidence for this increase of its waters early in Abib, about the middle of which month only harvest began in Judea. And it is the more strange surely, because, to support this version, he needs to have recourse to an ellipsis of a preposition. But it would swell the note too much, to give a full detail of the pretences for that opinion here, and then to attempt a particular confutation of them.

† Thus the loss, in a considerable degree, of the navigation of the Tiber, from Perugia to Rome, which had been suffered for ages with much inconvenience, was imputed to the too great spread of its channel in the end of last century. Wherefore when Meyerus, a Dutchman, was employed first by Pope Clement X. and then by his succes-

channel, or perhaps to some of its waters being diverted another way. For, through these causes, like changes in the height to which rivers rise have often occurred. Now how different an idea do these accounts of its general wideness, by gentlemen of character who were upon the spot, and this circumstance of its periodical inundation at the time of the Hebrews arrival there, give us of its state then from our author? As to his blaming Joshua for neglecting the easy expedient of a wooden bridge, what evidence is there that this method of transporting troops had been in that age contrived; or that their enemies would have allowed them to carry such a scheme into execution, upon its being formed? If he will pay any regard to Josephus, from whom alone he seems to have borrowed his imputation of anxiety to Joshua, he says † ‘He was afraid because the river
 * was great in its stream, and it was not passable by
 * bridges, for none had been laid over it formerly,
 * nor did they think, had they been willing to throw
 * bridges over it, their foes would have suffered them,
 * and there were no boats for navigating across it.’ But be these things as a person pleases, it is a sufficient answer to observe, that the use of any artificial help here, would not have served the purposes of providence, to assure the nations that the Israelites were under the special care of heaven, and would,

for pope Innocent XI. to restore that navigation, he proposed to straiten the channel by driving stakes into the ground along the sides, where the waters were shallow, and interweaving them with twigs, at the distance of three or four hand-breadth from one another, as appears by his book on that subject, published in 1685.

† Antiq. 5. 1.

by divine power, be enabled to expel them for their wickedness.

Finally, whereas he speaks of several fords, by which it was easy to pass the river, if he mean hereby places where it might, without danger, be crossed on foot, which is the only sense that suits his intention, I ask, what proof hath he that there were such, and that there were such in the neighbourhood of Jericho? If we read of the passages of Jordan toward Moab, Judg. iii. 28. and of the passages of Jordan where the Gileadites stopped the Ephraimites, Judg. xii. 5. how does it appear that they were not ferrying places? Is it not even more likely that they were, when we consider the testimonies of travellers about the depth of the river, and its dimensions from side to side? So the learned Reland understood them, 'For, says he, it is probable † that it was the custom, ' in antient times, to pass the Jordan at different ' places in a boat, and there are some indications of ' this in the Sacred Books, as in Judges, iii. 28.' In the same manner also, Dr. Lightfoot † explained what we read about David and his company's passing over Jordan, in the neighbourhood of Jericho, 2 Sam. xix. 17. ' This, says he, was a most known and frequent ' passage from Jericho, which we often read of in ' Scripture, yet it seems rather to have been by boat ' than bridge *;' as indeed we are expressly told,

† Palaestina, lib. 1. cap. 43. page 278, 279.

† His Works, vol. 2. page 492.

* So far as I know, however, there were never any bridges over the Jordan but two, the one betwixt the lake of Samochon and Genesareth, through both which lakes it flows, the other near Tiberias, at the very efflux of it from the last lake; both far distant from Gil-

verse 18. that there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And, in confirmation of this, we may remark, that the place where John baptized, is supposed to have been named Bethabara, the house of passage, because there persons were commonly carried in a vessel over the Jordan, John, i. 28. Besides, though there had been places where it was so shallow, in its ordinary condition, that people were accustomed to walk through it on foot, and these also at no considerable distance, they could be no way serviceable to Joshua and the Israelites at this time, because it was swelled to an unusual height *, and passed all its banks. Even if there had been a ford, it would have signified little, if the host of Israel passed over in such breadth as to occupy several miles, which the Jewish doctors suppose from Numb. xxxiii. 49. 'And they pitched by Jordan from Bethjesimoth, even unto Abel-shittim, in the plains of Moab.'—Though the middle of the host, or those that carried the ark, passed over right against Jericho, Joshua, iii. 16.

gal and Jericho, near which the ark entered its stream. See Lightfoot, *ibidem*.

* An ancient church historian hath described this matter concisely, but happily; 'Jordanis flumen validissimum transitum prohibebat, quia neque navium copia pro tempore erat, neque vadari fluvius poterat, qui tum pleno alveo ferebatur.' Sulpic. Sever. Hist. Sacra, lib. 1. cap. 22. I know indeed, De Prado would read *vadosissimum*, as the epithet of the river, instead of *validissimum*, which would make it 'full of fords or shallow places,' instead of, mighty and impetuous. But this is without all authority of MSS. Nor is there any likelihood it was the original expression, since *validum* is no unusual character of rivers, and was suitable to the Jordan.

In the same chapter †, our author introduces the Jews thus pleading their right to Canaan, against its antient inhabitants, ‘ The Jews, said they, descended from Abraham, Abraham travelled among you about 400 years ago, therefore your country belongs to us, and we ought to cut the throats of your mothers, wives, and children.’ But where did they ever employ so weak and foolish an argument? they were entitled to reason thus, ‘ The Lord hath given us your land by covenant with our progenitor Abraham, and he sheweth himself to be with us, by drying the river Jordan, and by other miracles; therefore we have a right to possess it in virtue of his grant, who is universal Lord and Proprietor, for his is the earth and the fulness thereof.’ But to put such an argument into their mouths did not answer Mr. Voltaire’s design, who studied to make them ridiculous. *

† Page 191.

* As to the objection of Fabricius and Holstenius, who, he says, compared the Israelites to Norwegians pretending a title to Germany, because about 200 years ago, a countryman of theirs, who was the son of a porter, travelled near Vienna, p. 192. I wish he had told us where it was to be found. Though I have not been able to discover how the matter stands by a search into their works, I will venture to be positive, that they thought the claim of the Israelites very different, since it appears from Voltaire’s own words in the next page, that they looked on the Jews as commissioned by God to drive out the possessors of Canaan, and to dwell in their room, for he says, ‘ The same authors particularly consider, that God had a right to punish the sins of the Canaanites by the hands of the Jews.’

SECTION XII.

Of misrepresentations in the same chapter, with regard to the state of the Jews under the government of the Judges.

I PASS his recital, 'That* the Jews sacrificed to 'their God, the inhabitants and animals of Jericho,' which can only signify, in consistence with truth, that they put them to death by his order; and his cavil at the mission of the spies 'as useless, because 'the walls were to fall at the sound of the trumpets,' which must appear foolish, as there was no foreknowledge in the general of their miraculous subversion and ruin, to supersede so prudent a measure for discovering the situation and strength of Jericho. But I must bestow greater attention on the many falsehoods, which are found in his representation of the state of the Jews under the government of the judges.

Thus, after telling us 'They were in bondage to 'Cushan-Rishathaim eight years,' he says, 'They 'remained †sixty-two years upon the same spot.' which is surely a very odd paraphrase of the historian's words, Judges, iii. 11. 'That the land had rest,' continued in a state of tranquillity and peace 'forty 'years,' neither giving disturbance to others, nor receiving molestation from them, through this interval.—And he adds, 'These †sixty-two years,' he should rather have said, these forty years, 'were a 'space of servitude, as they were commanded by 'the law, to take all the country from the Mediter-

* Page 192.

† Page 193.

‡ Ibid.

‘ranean to the Euphrates, all this vast extent of
 ‘country being promised to them; and they would
 ‘doubtless have been tempted to seize upon it, if
 ‘they had been at liberty.’ But where is the consequence? must a nation be in a state of servitude, whenever they do not enlarge their borders according to their just title? may not a fear of superior force restrain such an attempt? may not mere indolence and sloth prevent it? and yet a people enjoy their liberty? So it was here. The servitude of the Israelites terminated with eight years, Judges, iii. 8. but they did not proceed to drive out the natives, through a love of ease, and an aversion to the toils of war amidst their own sufficient accommodation in the country. They were content to allow their continuance in the land, upon payment of tribute, which proved a great source of misfortunes, as by intermarriage with them and other methods, they were led away to worship their idols, whence God was provoked to forsake them, and to permit their enemies to oppress them.

Again, having related they were eighteen years in bondage under Eglon king of the Moabites, ‘who
 ‘was assassinated by Aod,’ that is Ehud, why does he subjoin, ‘They were afterwards† for twenty-eight
 ‘years slaves to a people of Canaan whom they do
 ‘not name, till the warlike prophetess Deborah delivered them?’ for had not the land rest eighty years after shaking off Moab’s yoke, Judges, iii. 30? Are not the people who next oppressed them in effect named, when it is said, the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor?

† Page 193.

Q 4

whose seat appears to have been about the coast of the Mediterranean sea, by comparing Joshua xi. 1, 10. and Joshua, v. 1, where for 'Kings of Canaan-ites,' the Seventy have, 'Kings of Phoenicia.' And is it not expressly observed, that his tyranny was of shorter continuance by eight years than he calls it, Judges, iv. 2, 3?

It follows, 'Gideon* held them afterwards for seven years in bondage;' but is it not plain he should have written Midian instead of Gideon, forasmuch as Gideon freed the land from thralldom to the Midianites, after it had lasted for this period, and subdued them so completely, that they lifted up their heads no more, but the country was in quietness under his government and administration forty years, Judges, vi. 1. viii. 28?

He goes on, 'They were for†eighteen years slaves to the Phenicians, whom they call Philistines, till the time of Jephtha; they were then for forty years more, slaves to the Phenicians till the time of Saul.' But had he reason in this manner to make his readers think, they continued in a state of slavery from Jephtha's till Saul's time? No. From Jephtha's death who subdued the children of Ammon, into the hands of whom and of the Philistines God had sold them before his appearance, and who judged Israel six years, we do not read of their enduring any oppression at all, during the government of his three successors Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, though this filled the space of twenty-five years. We are only told after Abdon's exit, Judges, xiii. 1. 'And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord

* Page 194.

† Ibid.

‘delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years,’ which plainly intimates they had recovered their liberty from them, as well as from the Ammonites before; nor did even this new reduction of them under the power of the Philistines last till Saul’s time: for, without entering into the nice debates among chronologers here, whether the servitude that begun now had not been removed sooner, is not Samuel expressly recorded to have smitten and discomfited them, so that they returned no more into the land of Israel, all the days of his magistracy? yet it was not till he had resigned his power into the hands of his sons, who were men of a very opposite character, that Saul was raised to the throne. See 1 Sam. vii. and succeeding chapters.

Such are his deviations from the Sacred History, with relation to the state of the Jews under the judges. At the same time let it be observed, that the servitudes which the Jews now underwent, were the punishment of their idolatry and other sins, Judges, iii. 7, 8. xii. 13, 14. iv. 1, 2. vi. 1, 2. x. 7, 8. not the effects of the hatred of the neighbouring people against them, as an execrable banditti, which is Mr. Voltaire’s account * of them; for this would have operated their dominion over them in pure and religious, as well as in degenerate and wicked times, which it did not. Farther, let it be remarked these servitudes, whatever figure they make in our author, did not extend through a third part of the interval between Joshua’s death and Saul’s promotion: wherefore when the different seasons of their duration are collected into one sum, they only make one

* Phil. of Hist. p. 191.

hundred and eleven years. And finally, let it be considered, that they were not exclusive of all comfort and happiness, which is the idea we annex to slavery, for as† Perizonius takes notice in his *Egyptiaca*, it was common among the people of the East to say a nation or king became a servant, when they were compelled for the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity, to pay tribute to strangers, especially when this was heavy, and levied with rigour.

SECTION XIII.

Of his accounts in the same chapter, of the number of Jews exterminated by their own brothers, or by the order of God himself, from their entering the wilderness till Saul's election to be their king.

TOWARD the conclusion of the same *forty-first chapter, he proposes 'stopping a moment to observe
' how many Jews were exterminated by their own
' brothers, or by the order of God himself, from the
' time that they wandered in the desert, till the time
' that they had a king elected by drawing lots.'

And who would have expected, after this preamble, he would have taken them into his catalogue,

† Page 465, 'Dicebant illi servire alteri eum qui tributum modo illi pendebat, et rebellare quando id negabat. Ita Ezekias, 2 Reg. xviii. 7.' Grotius's note on Judges, iii. 14 'Servierunt ei,' is 'id est coacti sunt pacem gravibus tributis redimere.' So Josephus, *Antiq.* p. 151, explains their servitude to Eglon. Compare Vulgate version, Gen. xlix. 15. 2 Sam. viii. 2, 6. Ps. lxxii. 8. 11. 2 Reg. xvii. 3. 4. In all which places, the Hebrew word which denotes, being a servant, is interpreted by, being tributary.

* Phil. of Hist. p. 195.

who died without any intervention or interposition of man at all, as by fire from heaven, by pestilence, or other divine judgment? so however he does; for he introduces into the list the two hundred and fifty that perished by fire from the Lord at Korah's mutiny and revolt, the fourteen thousand and seven hundred that were destroyed by the plague on the same occasion, the twenty-four thousand that were consumed by the same calamity, for their whoredom with the daughters of Moab, and their joining themselves to † Baal-peor, and them that were struck dead for looking into the ark at Bethshemesh. But this may be apologized for as mere inaccuracy of expression, for which he afterwards makes amends, when he substitutes the phrase 'exterminated by the hand,' instead of 'exterminated by the order of God.'

What however admits no excuse is, that he sometimes swells the numbers of them whose lives were destroyed, without any authority, and gives a false account of the cause of their death.

Thus † he says, 'Slain at the ford of Jordan, for not being able to pronounce the word *Shibboleth*, 'forty-two thousand.' But this was not the cause of the slaughter of these Ephraimites by Jephtha. The Ephraimites had threatened to burn him and all he

† These two last he denominates, 'Put to death for Korah's revolt, and put to death for having correspondence with Midianite girls,' p. 194. but very unfairly.

† Ib. Perhaps our author borrowed this from Monsieur Lignon's Dictionnaire de la Bible Portatif, who upon the word *Shibboleth* says 'Word which the Ephraimites could not pronounce, saying *Sibboleth*, and which cost the lives of forty-two thousand men.'

had, on pretence that he had fought the Ammonites without summoning them to his standard. Nevertheless, he had called them to arms, if not at going to battle after he had collected his forces, at least when he was making preparations for the war; and they had declined to answer his charge, probably through fear of resentment and vengeance by these enemies. Now surely this was a very atrocious crime in itself, and would be reckoned the more such, that he had given the Ammonites battle with so great success, as to put an end to their oppression of the country; he therefore, full of indignation at their ungrateful slander, gathered the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim, and smote them; and thereafter the men of Gilead took possession of the passages of the Jordan before the Ephraimites, and stopping all that arrived there, slew as belonging to that tribe, every one that could not frame his mouth to sound Shibboleth, but said Sibboleth, ‘And there fell at that time of the Ephraimites, forty-two thousand,’ Judges, xii. 1—6. These were probably all among the tribe of Ephraim, that lost their lives upon this occasion, and not merely the fugitives who were killed at the fords. For how strange to suppose, either that none perished in the engagement, or that the historian, omitting all account of their number, only recorded the sum of them that were destroyed in their flight after the action? but though it should be otherwise, it is evident, the not being able to pronounce Shibboleth, (which according to some signifies, an ear of corn, but according to others, floods of water, such as they wanted to cross, as in Ps. lxxix. 2.) was not the reason of their

being killed; it was only the criterion or test, by which those of that tribe were distinguished from other Israelites, that they might be put to the sword according to their demerit, for their false reflections and insolent menaces against the victorious general. For it seems such could not utter *Sibboleth*, but only *Sibboleth*, as indeed we may see the like at this day, among the inhabitants of different counties, where all speak the same language.

Again he makes, 'Of the tribe of Benjamin killed by the other tribes 45000,' whereas they were according to the history only 25100; indeed it was impossible there could be so many killed as he represents, since the whole number of the Benjamites, in conjunction with the men of Gibeah before the battle, according to the Hebrew and Chaldee, amounted only to 26700, Judges, xx. 15. but, according to the Vulgate, whose reading our author sometimes prefers, and to many * copies of the Seventy, fell short even of this sum by one thousand. Accordingly, it is said, Judges, xx. 35. 'The children of Israel destroyed and smote of the Benjamites that day, twenty and five thousand, and an hundred men.' And to this account agrees the particular detail of their losses in the field of battle, and in the paths of flight, together with the general combination of both into

* Bos in his edition of the Seventy from the Vatican MS. has only 23000, as the whole number of the Benjamite forces. But the Alexandrian and Oxford MSS. have 25000, besides the 700 of Gibeah; and theirs must be the true reading, because all copies have the numbers killed, and the numbers surviving, as above. Josephus makes the number of the troops 25600, and the slain only 25000, Antiq. 5. 2. 11.

one number which follows, ver. 44, 45, 46. allowance being made for the omission of the odd hundred, who are evidently supposed to have fallen somewhere in this war, as it is said only 600 men remained of their whole multitude at the rock Rimmon, ver. 47.

I have no right to find fault with his article about the † Bethshemites, who were struck dead for looking into the ark, as disingenuous. For the text, 1 Sam. vi. 19. is commonly read and translated in such a manner, that his state of the killed here 50070 men is perfectly exact. Yet it is well known to all who are acquainted with sacred criticism, that Bochart, Le Clerc, and others, explain the original, even as it stands at present, in so different a way, that the whole number which perished on this occasion makes only seventy men. And Dr. Kennicot, upon the authority of two Hebrew MSS. which have only one number in this place, instead of two numbers, so reforms the text, (how justly I cannot now examine) as to be capable of no other sense than that seventy were all that died. But why does he describe their offence by looking at the ark, a thing which, on its return, appears natural and innocent, and in some degree unavoidable, when the fault seems, both by the Hebrew and all versions, so far as I know, to have been undeniably their opening its cover, and inspecting it? Surely as none of the priests themselves, or at least none of the common Levites, were by the law allowed to touch this sacred symbol of the divine presence, this renders their transgression higher, and, by consequence, the punishment more de-

† Philosophical Dictionary, page 194.

fensible. See Numb. iv. 15—19. and compare Exod. xxiv. 15. with the passage about the fate of the Bethshemites, a little before referred to.

To finish my animadversions on this chapter, whereas he calls the Jews, exterminated by the hand of God himself, or by their civil wars from the time that they wandered in the desert, till the time that they had a king elected by drawing lots, 239020, without reckoning those that died in the battles against the Canaanites, or that perished in the desert, (by which last he must signify, that fell by natural disease and fatal accident) there must be deduced from this number, no fewer than 39900; for, that he swells the Jews, whom the Levites killed after the adoration of the golden calf, 20000 beyond the truth, was shewed before; and now it hath been evinced, that he increases the slain of the tribe of Benjamin, 19900 beyond the history. And it follows also, there would fall to be subtracted still 50000 more, if either Dr. Kennicot's † reading of the text in Samuel be the true one, or the explication of the text, in its present form, which these learned men, Bochart ‡ and Le Clerc, have proposed, as I incline to think it ought, should be preferred.

† See Kennicot's Observations on 1 Sam. vi. 19.

‡ Bochart Hierozoic. p. 1. lib. 2. cap. 36. Le Clerc Comment. in locum.

SECTION XIV.

Of falsehoods in his account of the Jews after Saul, in chapter forty-second; as, that David delivered up seven grandsons of Saul to the Gabonites, only to be perplexed.—That he ordered Solomon to put to death Adonijah.—And that the ten tribes were enslaved or dispersed for ever, except some husbandmen who were kept to cultivate the land, &c.

MR. VOLTAIRE, in the forty-second chapter of his *Philosophy of History*, professes to treat of the Jews after Saul. But it will not detain us long. For he is very short in his relation of their affairs and transactions, through that part of this period of their state which the Scripture comprehends. And we now aim only to expose his misrepresentations hereof. Still, however, it affords additional proof that he is a very unfaithful guide.

Thus, he tells us, † ‘David delivered up seven grandsons of Saul to the Gabonites, only to be perplexed,’ when, from the sacred writer, we learn they were only his five grandsons by his eldest daughter Merab, whom Michal his daughter had brought up for Adriel, and his two sons by his concubine Rizpah. Nor was his delivery of them the cause of his perplexity. It was indeed antecedent to it. For, having inquired of the Lord what offence gave rise to the famine which afflicted the land three years, and having been answered that it was the murder of the Gibeonites

† Page 196.

by Saul and his bloody house, he sent to know what satisfaction they demanded for the wrong. They, instead of desiring silver or gold as a compensation, required that seven of his sons might be given into their hands to be put to death by them. Upon this only he appears to have been reduced to some distress how he should gratify them, and save Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan his friend, from gratitude to his father, and regard to the oath of amity between them. And he extricated himself from it by seeking out and conveying to them these males of the family above-mentioned, whom it was the more inexcusable in Voltaire to call Saul's seven grandsons here, as in the former sentence he had said, 'Ishbosheth and Mephibosheth, Saul's sons, were assassinated;' for this Mephibosheth was the very son of Saul by his concubine Rizpah, who was delivered to the Gibeonites, and by them killed. See 1 Sam. xxi. 1—9. and compare 1 Sam. xviii. 19.—I shall only add, how unreasonable in infidels to make the whole of this an artifice in David for securing himself and his family in the possession of the crown? For this accusation there is no handle, since he spared all the male branches of Saul's house who had the first claim, particularly Mephibosheth the next heir, as Jonathan's eldest son, whose son Micah again had a numerous posterity, 2 Sam. ix. 12. Perhaps these very men who were put in the power of the Gibeonites, had been employed in murdering and plundering them, that they might enrich themselves with their spoils.

Again, he says, 'David ordered † Solomon his son
* to put to death Adonijah his other son, and his ge-

† Page 196.

‘neral Joab.’ And it is true, that he gave such a charge about Joab, who well deserved to be cut off for his insolent behaviour to himself, and his treacherous shedding of the blood of his two brave generals, Abner and Amasa, 1 Kings, ii. 5. But where do we read that he declared any desire to have Adonijah slain, as criminal as his conduct was in assuming the royal dignity without his authority, and against his intentions? Solomon himself, who succeeded David on the throne by his express direction, assured this Adonijah, when he had taken sanctuary at the horns of the altar through conscious guilt, that he should not suffer any punishment for his attempt to seize the kingdom, if he approved himself, for the future, a worthy or honest man, 1 Kings, i. 50, 53. and he only proceeded, after some interval, to take away his life when he presumed to make use of Bathsheba’s intercession, that he might obtain his leave to marry Abishag, the Shunamite virgin, who had been the cherisher of David’s old-age, at the same time intimating, that this was but a small recompence for the surrender of the crown, which belonged to him by the right of primogeniture, amidst the universal attachment of the nation to him, 1 Kings, ii. 24. which was surely a very heinous offence.

I complain not for his saying, in the next page, that ‘King Aza put part of the people of Jerusalem to death;’ for, though our translators say in the text only ‘He oppressed some of them,’ that is, he gave them severe and rigorous usage, 2 Chron. xvi. 12. (whence the Targum paraphrases it ‘He enslaved them,’) they have placed in the margin, ‘He crushed,’

and others expound it, 'He flew some of them.' So Houbigant, who makes the cause to have been their displeasure which they testified against him for incarcerating the prophet Hanani, on account of his free censure and reproof of his conduct in applying to Benhadad king of Syria for help, when, by divine favour, he had been so lately victorious over the immense host of the Ethiopians; and to this purpose he, by a small variation, reads and renders the whole verse thus, 'Then Afa was wroth with the 'feer, and put him in a prison-house, though in the 'indignation of his people about this,' (that is, though his people were angry at such confinement of him) 'and he flew some of the people at the same time.' But why does he assert that 'Jehu assassinated Joram and 'Josias, seventy sons of Ahab, forty-two brothers of 'Achazias, and all their friends?' The Scripture calls the person whom he flew after Joram king of Israel, not Josias, but Ahaziah king of Judah, who had been his auxiliary, in his attempt to recover Ramoth-gilead from the Syrians, 2 Kings, ix. 27. and while it relates, that he killed all the brethren of this Ahaziah, whoever *are meant thereby, 2 Kings, x. 13, 14. makes not the least mention of his butchering all their friends.

* The reason of this qualification is, while some understand 'his brethren' in a strict sense, others interpret the word 'of his kinsmen,' according to that more lax and extensive signification of it, which is not unusual in Scripture; wherefore, Lot is called Abraham's brother, though he was his brother Haran's son, and Zedekiah uncle to Jehoiakim is called, his brother. See Gen. xii. xiii. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. and 2 Kings, xxiv. 17. Indeed this last explication is thought more probable, partly because there is mention of his finding his son's sons,

Finally, while it is not very material, that he represents Zacharias to have been slain by Menahem, whereas according to the sacred historian, he was put to death by Shallum the son of Jabesh, as he again was assassinated by Menahem, 2 Kings, xv. 8. It is surely of some importance to animadvert on his assertion 'That the ten tribes who were carried off by 'Salmanassar king of the Babylonians, were enslaved 'and dispersed for ever, except some husbandmen 'who were kept to cultivate the land;' For how glaring his fallhood here! Not to mention that a greater number of the ten tribes seem to have continued in their own country from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6—9. it is plain, these with the other two tribes, had a share in the promise of being recalled, and dwelling again in that land, Jerem. xxxi. &c. It is certain also, that Cyrus and Artaxerxes invited all the Jews indiscriminately, as they were all under their government, to return into the country of their fathers, and lastly, it is evident, that multitudes of the ten tribes, taking the advantage of these royal edicts, went back, as well as their brethren of Judah and Benjamin, to settle there, though perhaps but a small part in comparison of those that chose to abide in the territory where their enemies had planted them, having been reconciled to it by a residence of almost two hundred years, and having acquired property therein. See Ezra, i. 3, 2. 70. vi. 17, 21. vii. 13, 28. viii. 35. 1 Chron. ix. 13. *

partly because his brethren, literally so called, appear to have been carried captive by some enemies, who made a successful incursion into Judah before this; nor do we read of their being released and sent home, 2 Chron. xxi. 17. with Patrick's notes.

* Compare Ant. Univ. Hist. 4. 317. and 10. 180, 181. in

SECTION XV.

Of misrepresentations in his forty-third chapter, 'Of the Jewish prophets,' that Balaam was the prophet of another God,—that Jeremiah, Isaiah, &c. were ill-treated, because it was difficult to distinguish between false and true pretenders to the prophetic character,—that Hosea declares the prophets fools,—that the prophets treated one another as visionaries, there being no other method to separate the true from the false, but by waiting for the accomplishment of the predictions.

MR. VOLTAIRE's next* chapter, which is 'Of the Jewish prophets,' furnishes us with more numerous proofs of his neglect of truth.

Notes. Agreeably, not only is there mention of Anna of the tribe of Aser at Jerusalem, when Jesus was presented to God in the temple there; but the ten tribes are spoken of as existing in the times of the apostles, as well as the two, by whatever name their posterity are now called, and in whatever places they are at present situated. Says Paul before Agrippa, 'I am judged for the hope of the promise made of God to our fathers, unto which promise our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come,' Acts, xxvi. 6, 7. James inscribes his epistle to so many, 'James a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.' i. 1. And Josephus himself is express, that as the two tribes were spread through the Roman empire in Asia and Europe, so when he wrote, the other ten tribes inhabited the region beyond the Euphrates, and were such multitudes as could not be computed, Antiq. 11. 5. 2. to say nothing of the stories of the Talmudists, which are so full of wonders about the regularity and splendor of their government, as to deserve no credit.

* Phil. of Hist. ch. 43. p. 103.

When he says, 'We know that God did not communicate himself to the Jews, except in some particular cases, as for example when he inspired Balaam, the prophet of * Mesopotamia, and made him utter the contrary of what he was to have been made to say,' I suppose there is a slip of the pen, or an error of the press; for the connection requires he should have denied, not God's communicating himself to the Jews, but his communicating himself to others than the Jews, except on rare occasions. But when he proceeds, 'This Balaam† was the prophet of another god, and yet it is not said that he was a false prophet,' it does not admit such an apology. Does the Scripture teach us to view Balaam in this light? No. It neither calls him the prophet of an idol-deity, as it does others, nor affords any good reasons for forming this judgment concerning him. On the contrary, it shews us, that he addressed Jehovah instead of a fictitious divinity. Therefore Moses reminds his nation, 'Jehovah thy God would not hearken to Balaam, but Jehovah thy God turned the curse into a blessing, because Jehovah thy God loved thee,' Deut. xxiii. 5. And Jehovah, God of Israel, mentions this by the mouth of Joshua, among

* A learned foreigner, Harenberg, by the Mesopotamia or Aram Naharaim of Scripture, understands not the country between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, but that between Jordan and the river Jaboc to its east, even Bashan or Batanaca. See *Acta Erudit. Lipsiac.* 1740, p. 270. &c.

† This same Voltaire, when it suits his purpose, scruples not to say elsewhere, 'Balaam though an idolater, was his (the living God's) prophet, to shew that God takes as much care of idolaters, as of his chosen Jews.'

other favours which he had bestowed on them, 'Balaak sent and called Balaam, the son of Beor, to curse thee, but I would not hearken to Balaam,' Josh. xxiv. 2, 9. It represents him also as well acquainted with this name of the God of Israel, by which he was distinguished from all the Gentile gods. For when the elders of Moab and Midian first asked him to curse the Israelites, he answered, he would bring account what Jehovah should say to him, in relation to their errand and affair, Numb. xxii. 8. and when he learned his determination, he reported it unto them with this preamble, 'Must I not take heed to speak that which Jehovah hath put in my mouth?' xxiii. 10. Perhaps indeed they were more ready to ask his assistance, because he was looked on as a prophet of the same Deity whom the Israelites worshipped; for they might thence hope, they would by his intercession more easily draw him off from his care and protection of them, and incline him to favour and prosper themselves. Accordingly, I do not remember to have read of any divines who denied him to be a true prophet but Gisb. Voetius, who built his opinion on this principle, that no true prophets resided at any time among the Gentiles, that is, any other nation than Israel.

A little after, he attributes the bad treatment of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, to the difficulty of distinguishing true and false pretenders to the prophetic character*, 'It was difficult to distinguish the false prophet from the true one. Wherefore Manasseh, king of Judea, had Isaiah sawn asunder. The king Sedecias could not decide between Jeremiah and Hana-

* Page 204.

‘ niah, who foretold contrary things; and he imprisoned Jeremiah. Ezekiel was slain by Jews his fellow-captives.’

That Isaiah was fawn afunder by Manasseh, our author without any hesitation here asserts; and indeed it hath been eagerly believed by the Jewish doctors, and most fathers of the Christian church. Nevertheless there are many circumstances, which render it very doubtful; for it seems probable Isaiah was dead before Manasseh succeeded to the throne, since he is not mentioned among the kings in whose reign he prophesied, Isaiah, i. 1.—It appears unaccountable such murder should have been omitted by the sacred writers of * later times, who yet have recorded the destruction of the lives of prophets, less famous, by royal mandate, as of Zechariah, by the order of king Joash, 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. and of Urijah, by the command of Jehoiakim, Jerem. xxvi. 20—23.—Though Josephus say Manasseh killed all righteous men among † the Hebrews, and spared not the prophets, he is silent about Isaiah’s perishing by violence under him, as natural an occasion as he had to finish his account of him, by commemorating his martyrdom, and as particular as he is, in his mention of Zechariah’s being stoned to death in the temple under Joash.—The traditionary ‡ story related in the Gema-

* Justin Martyr indeed, in his Dialogue with Trypho, hath charged the Jews with erasing Isaiah’s cruel death by Manasseh out of the Old Testament, p. 349. Edit. Paris. But I suppose this meets with no credit now, more than his accusation of them for taking away ‘ from the tree,’ after ‘ The Lord reigned,’ Ps. xcv. *ibid.* 298.

† Antiq. 10. chap. 2. 3. and 9. 8. 3.

‡ See this cited in Vitringa’s preface to his Commentary on Isaiah.

ra about his death, hath many things in it evidently fabulous and incredible; for instance, that a cedar tree opened and inclosed the prophet to shelter him from the wrath of this prince, that the king caused saw it, that the saw was of* wood, (a strange instrument for the service!) and that Isaiah expired as soon as the saw reached his lips: which things create a presumption that the whole is an idle legendary tale. And as to the words of the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in his recital of mens great achievements through faith, 'Some were sawn asunder,' which have been often urged, in confirmation and support of this tradition about Isaiah's fate; it may be observed, that they afford no sure evidence of its truth, since he speaks of several who with courage resigned their lives in that form, and does not authorize us to conclude, that he alludes to the sufferings of holy men under Manasseh, more than under other wicked

* Some however explain this wooden saw, with which Isaiah is said by several antient fathers to have been sawed in two from the head downward, to signify by an Hebraism, not a saw made of wood, but a saw with which wood used to be sawn, a saw prepared for cutting timber. So Authors of Ant. Univ. Hist. 8vo. p. 133. I suppose they mean that *πριων ξυλου*, a saw of wood, might by the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, receive such sense, because the genitive after a noun, is sometimes employed to express the final cause, that is, the design or purpose to be served by the thing or person which that noun denotes; of which Glassius mentions 'sheep of slaughter, Ps. xlv. 23. sons of death, Ps. cii. 21.' as instances, these phrases standing for, sheep and men destined to lose their lives. But besides that the fathers, if I am not mistaken, use the adjectives *ξυλινος* or *ligneus*, according as they write in Greek or Latin, such examples of the sense of the genitive will scarcely be admitted to be altogether parallel.

rulers, and particularly under Antiochus Epiphanes, by whom the Jews that were tenacious of their law, were treated in a most barbarous manner, and subjected to the most unexampled miseries and pains in dying. Compare Heb. xi. 37. and the books† of the Maccabees.

But admitting that Isaiah had an end put to his life by Manasseh, in the way our author relates, (as indeed it cannot be questioned, whether he was capable of committing such a crime, when the heinous wickednesses are considered, which the writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles inform us he practised, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3—10. and 2 Kings, xxi. 2, 9.) and likewise that Ezekiel was slain by his fellow captives, though about this, Scripture is silent, while it acquaints us with Jeremiah's imprisonment, must the account Voltaire gives of the ground of their cruel usage be the just one? certainly it does not follow, that it was hard to discern between the messengers of God and impostors, because those who bore that honourable character and office, were sometimes incarcerated and killed; for men often act in opposition to the clearest evidence, nay to the general sense and persuasion of their own minds about duty and interest, through the impetuosity of wicked passions, whence the poet makes Medea say,

——‘ Video meliora, proboque,

‘ Deteriora sequor,’——

Might not the Jews then deprive one prophet of his liberty, and two others of their life, amidst the most satisfactory and convincing proofs of a commission from heaven, provoked by their free censure of their

† Vid. Rocque's Discours, &c.

vices, and their plain denunciations of divine judgments for obstinacy in them? to deny they might, is in effect to maintain, that no divine teacher who brought sufficient credentials of his being sent from God, hath ever been abused, and put to death as a deceiver, which is as unreasonable, as it would be to affirm, that no excellent man hath ever been condemned by unjust decrees, and executed as a malefactor unworthy to live, when there have been good arguments for the truth of the principles he held, and the obligation of the duties he inculcated; a position which is contradicted by the history of the world in different ages and countries, as might be shewed by many examples.

Not to repeat what hath been already observed, about his misrepresentation of Zedekiah's reply to Micaiah here, he adds in support of his assertion, that it was difficult to distinguish the false prophet from the true one, 'Ofens,* chap. ix. declares that the ' prophets are fools, "stultum prophetam, insanum virum spiritualem." But how absurd this quotation to prove the point? It rather establishes the contrary; for the sense is, that the nation of Israel would be constrained by the arrival and prevalence of their enemies to confess, that these persons who boasted authority from God, and endowment with his spirit, while they promised them safety in their idolatry and other crimes, were themselves under the influence of a deluded imagination; wherefore, they had sinned in hearkening to such assurances from them, in opposition to that scheme of religion and system of laws, which had been introduced among them

with the most infallible demonstrations of a divine original, 'The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense. Israel shall know the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, &c.' So runs the verse Hosea, ix. 7.

'The prophets' he * goes on, 'treated one another as visionaries and liars; there was no other method then of separating the true from the false, but by waiting for the accomplishment of the predictions.' But as true prophets never treated one another as visionaries, but on the contrary shewed each other the greatest mutual respect, see Daniel, ix. 2. so it is no wonder they all endeavoured to expose the false pretenders to a divine commission, since these thro' their promises of prosperity to their countrymen, while they continued in their notorious violation of the law of Moses, hardened them against all their attempts to humble, alarm, and reform them by their remonstrances and threatnings in the name of God. Indeed they, on the other hand, were ready to call them deceivers, vexed at the loss of their credit and reputation by their invectives against them; but this was no more than was to be expected.—Is it however a necessary consequence from this, that there was no other test or criterion of righteous and unrighteous claimants to a mission from heaven, but the accomplishment or disappointment of their predictions, and that contemporaries had no other possible method to discover whether such as professed themselves his messengers were to be honoured or neglected, but to wait the event of their oracles? No. They might assuredly pronounce all were impostors, whose decla-

* Page 204.

rations tended to seduce them into, or confirm them in the service of idol-deities from Deut. xiii. 1. and be fully satisfied without delay, that they were authorized by Jehovah, who while they pursued the purposes of Moses his servant, were enabled to work miracles uncontrolled, to reveal the secret thoughts and actions of men, or even were countenanced and favoured by others that had such irrefragable attestations to their prophetic character.

SECTION XVI.

Of his ill-founded reflexion in the same chapter, that Elifha's reply to Benhadad's servants was equivocal, ' That he might recover, but that he would die.'

IN the next paragraph, we meet with a reflexion on Elifha very * ill-founded, ' That he might have justified himself from any imputation of fallacy, if the king of Syria had not died but been cured of his disease, through the equivocalness of his reply to his servants, " That he might recover, but that he would die." For is it not plain to every attentive person, that the one clause of his answer only signifies, that his recovery was a thing possible to happen, but that the other declares that death would befall him? Suppose a man should say to another in the name of God, ' Thou mayst become rich, but thou shalt be poor,' would there be any just reason to blame him for ambiguity of expression, or any good cause to accuse him for leaving his fortune uncertain,

* Pages 204, 205.

so that he might vindicate the accuracy of his foreknowledge, whether he should be in opulent or straitened circumstances?

Thus the prophet's answer, according to the account which our author himself gives of it, is easily defended against his charge of equivocalness. Yet it may be proper to bestow a fuller consideration on this passage of Scripture, for the censure may be passed, with greater justice it should seem, upon his reply as it runs in the original 2 Kings, viii. 10. since in the former part of it, the verb which signifies 'to live' is employed in the future tense, and in the latter part, the verb which signifies, 'to die,' is also used in the same tense, each with its own infinitive, by which junction of the infinitive to the verb, the Hebrews are accustomed to express in a strong manner the certain arrival of any event mentioned, whether agreeable or disagreeable, in its season. It may therefore be translated thus, according to the reading and punctuation which the authors of our version followed, 'Elisha * said unto Hazael, Go, say unto him,' (i.e. to Benhadad the king of Syria, who sent thee) 'In ' living thou shalt live; howbeit the Lord hath shewed me, that in dying he shall die,' that is, that he shall surely die. And so there appears to be greater ground for the imputation of ambiguity than our author perceived, at least than he urged. I may rather say, there is a shew of contradiction in the answer, for it

* The original runs thus, according to the text לך אמר לא חיה תחיה והראני יהודה כי מות ימות *Lech emar lo bhajoh tibhieh veherani Jehovah ki moth ismuth*. But according to margin or *keri* it is לו instead of לא.

may be contended, he at once assures that the king shall recover, and that he shall die.

What then shall we offer in the prophet's behalf? to prepare the way for solving the difficulty it may be observed, that Elisha had already given many proofs of extraordinary power and knowledge; of extraordinary power I say, as in curing Naaman's leprosy, in restoring the Shunamite's son to life, in increasing the pot of oil, and the loaves of barley, in making the spring of water salutary, and the mess of pottage wholesome, and like works; of extraordinary knowledge I added, as in revealing these measures which the king of Syria planned and executed with the greatest secrecy against Israel, and in foretelling future contingencies, the miraculous supply of water, for instance, to the combined armies of Israel and Judah, together with their salvation from the Moabites, the Shunamite's conception and delivery of that son, for whose revival she afterwards needed and obtained his interposition, the sudden change from extreme famine to great plenty in Samaria, the loss of all share in this rich provision to that courtier, who rejected the prediction of it as of an event impossible and incredible, and similar things. Indeed, he had before this afforded so many demonstrations hereof, as leave no reasonable room to doubt his being a prophet of God. A very moderate degree of candour therefore, will make us unwilling to suppose, that he now predicted inconsistencies concerning Benhadad, and sent away Hazael his messenger, uncertain whether that prince would have his life prolonged, or shortened and cut off: and happily there is no necessity for fixing a declaration so full of contradiction upon him.

The common explication is, that in the first clause he shews the event according to the natural operation of the disease under which the king laboured, 'Go say to him, thou shalt surely live,' in answer to his enquiry, shall I recover of this disease: and that in the second, he declares the event through the application of human force and violence, by which the cure would be prevented, and the extinction of life effected, 'Howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.' In the same manner, on the other hand, Isaiah first predicted to Hezekiah his loss of life according to the natural energy of the distemper with which he was seized, 'Thou shalt die, and shalt not live.' 2 Kings, xx. 1. And thereafter, upon his humble and pathetic address to God, that his life might be prolonged, he foretold his speedy recovery through the exertion of a divine power to controll the native influence of his malady, and hinder its fatal issue in the course of physical causes.— Agreeably, we read that Hazael, having, on his return to Benhadad, who lay sick on his bed, reported that the prophet had directed him to acquaint him he would recover, next day stifled him with a thick cloth dipped in water; thus executing the scheme which he had formed of raising himself to the kingdom, as indeed he had been anointed unto it by the order of God, many years before, in Elijah's time, 1 Kings, xix. 15. and reassured of his enjoyment of it by this prophet ere he went away, after consulting him concerning Benhadad's indisposition.

If this account, however, please not, we may suppose that the prophet in his reply to Hazael's question, on behalf of Benhadad, 'Go tell him thou shalt

‘recover,’ makes use of the figure or trope called Irony, by which a person expresses a contrary meaning to the literal sense of his words, as appears from his manner of pronouncing them, or some other circumstance. As there are frequent examples of this in other writings, so there are some remarkable instances of it in the Sacred Books. Thus, in Micaiah’s speech to Ahab, ‘Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper:’ 1 Kings, xxii. 12. And in Solomon’s apostrophe to young men, ‘Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, walk after the sight of thine eyes, and after the way of thy * heart,’ Eccles. xi. 9.—And in Christ’s address to his disciples, ‘Sleep on now, and take your rest.’ Matth. xxvi. 45. For in all these cases, the speakers intended a severe prohibition of what they seem, by their words literally considered, to permit or injoin. And this answer to Hazael may be added to the number, as if Elisha had said, ‘Go, tell him he shall recover, disposed as you are, like a courtier, to flatter him, and encourage his hopes; nevertheless, the Lord hath shewed me he shall die, instead of ever being restored to health and soundness, and released from his confinement.’ Nor might he be in any suspense, it was the prophet’s design to forbid him, from his air in uttering the words, more than they who heard the words of the other speakers just recited upon their different occasions. It is true, upon this hypothesis, Hazael must have told a lie to his master, when he affirmed, at going home, The prophet told me, thou shalt surely recover. But this cannot be any valid objection to such sense, since it can never

* The latter clause in Ecclesiastes, xi. 9. begins with *vau*, there turned, *but*, here, *howbeit*.

be thought the man who, scrupled not to suffocate and smother his prince, would hesitate to relate to him a falsehood that he might render him more easy and secure, and, perhaps, facilitate the success of his own wicked machinations against him, by giving rise to greater negligence and remissness in attending upon him.

It will make little difference, if we reckon the first part of the answer, not a prohibition, in the way of irony, to carry assurances to Benhadad of his recovery, but a prediction that he would do it, for his own purposes. Hereby, as Jesus's words* to the Jews, when they asked from him some evidence of his authority at purging the temple, John, xx. 19. Destroy this temple, &c. were equivalent to his saying, Ye shall destroy this temple; so Elisha's words will be as if he had said, 'I know † thou wilt go and buoy him up with expectations of recovery from his disease, through thy fawning temper and disposition. But the Lord hath shewed me that he will die.' Thereafter, adds the historian, he fixed his eyes upon Ha-

* So in Virgil's Eclogue 7. ver. 36. 'Aureus esto,' is for 'Aureus eris,' where Thyrsis speaking of the effect if the young should recruit his flock, tells the god Priapus, he (i. e. his statue) should be of gold instead of marble,

'Si foetura gregem suppleverit, aureus esto.'

† This interpretation is adopted by Houbigant, as well as by some others. 'In his verbis, says he, "Dic ei, certissime vives," contineri 'Elisæi exprobrationem tacitam, cum non nesciret Elisæus hominem 'de aula regia suo regi adulaturum.' And seems much more easy than Schmidius's, who would read the first clause by way of interrogatory, 'Say to him, shalt thou live? Shall this favour be granted to thee, who hast so oppressed and vexed my people? by no means. For God hath shewed me thou shalt surely die.'

rael till he was ashamed, conscious, probably, of his own black contrivance †.

In any of these ways of interpretation, all shadow of charge against Elisha, for contradiction and equivocalness, is taken away. If, in one of them, we must

† These explications do all proceed upon supposition that the *keri* or marginal reading, is the true one which hath *to him*. And indeed, it appears very probable to have been the original one here, as well as in Ex. xxi. 8. Lev. xi. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 3. 2 Sam. xvi. 18. and some other places. For the authors of the antient versions, the Chaldee, Syriac, Greek, Arabic, and Vulgate, have all translated Elisha's answer to Hazael, as having that pronoun instead of the negative particle. Josephus also appears to have founded his relation of this interview between Elisha and Hazael on the same state of the text, for he says, Antiq. 9. 3. 4. 'He commanded Hazael to say nothing disagreeable to the king,' which he could not have said with justice, had the negative particle *not* been in his copies.—The change, moreover, might easily happen. For how readily might a transcriber write *not*, for *to him*, mistaking, through the sameness of the sound, that which was dictated. And, indeed, I would rather conjecture this to have been the cause of the corruption, than that any ignorant person, from a pious zeal for the honour and credit of Elisha (that he might not be thought to direct Hazael to utter a falsehood to Benhadad, in bidding him say, That he would surely live, when yet he had life soon cut off) wilfully vitiated his copy, and wrote the particle of negation instead of the pronoun.—Houbigant observes, in confirmation of the marginal reading, that the verb, with its infinitive conjoined as here, excludes the negation; for such a form of writing never occurs but when something is affirmed.—There are not wanting, however, learned men, who, after all, give the preference to the *textus* or textual reading *not*, though they are not agreed about the meaning. For some, joining it with *say*, translate *say not*, and suppose Elisha to forbid Hazael to give Benhadad any assurance of life, because God had revealed to him his death. 'Go, say not to Benhadad thou shalt surely live, for God hath shewed me he shall surely die.' And others join it with *live*, and make Elisha direct him to carry the melancholy tidings of his speedy dissolution.

suppose a certain tone of voice in speaking, or some other circumstance of which the historian makes no mention, this is no more than what we think equitable to admit in reading passages, both of antient and modern authors. Why then should we walk by different rules here?

SECTION XVII.

Of his saying that ‘little innocents’ were devoured at Bethel for words which they said to Elifha in ‘laughing.’—That Ifaiah walked three years quite naked in Jerusalem.—That Jeremiah was only fourteen years old when he was employed as a prophet; and that he prophesied in favour of Nebuchadnezzar.—And of a mistake in his account of God’s order to Hosea.

IN the same page† of the Philosophy of History, we have his recital of the transaction in the neighbourhood of Bethel. But no more is this altogether fair

‘Go, say, thou shalt not surely live; for God hath shewed me he shall surely die.’ Such is Junius’s and Tremellius’s version, such too is the translation of the Dutch divines, of Lyra, and Tostatus, and some Jewish Rabbis. And a third sort make the negative particle stand apart, and contain Elifha’s order to Hazael about his answer to the king’s interrogatory, whether he would recover of the disease; after which, according to them, he proceeds to declare what would be his own fate, and what would be the king’s. ‘Go say, not. Thou shalt surely live, but, the Lord hath shewed me he shall surely die.’ This is the explication given by Raschi, that is, Rabbi Salomon Jarchi, and by Guesetius, who thinks there is a similar use of *not*, 2 Kings, vi. 10. and 1 Kings, xi. 22.

† Page 205.

when he sets forth, 'That so many little children
'said to Elifha in laughing, Mount, bald-pate, Mount,'
and mentions 'the prophet's vengeance thereupon,
'in calling forth two bears who devoured the little
'innocents.'

For the original denotes that they spake these words, 'Mount,' or rather, 'Ascend, thou bald-pate,' 'Ascend, thou bald-pate,' in derision and mockery, away with thyself to heaven, after the example of thy master Elijah. Agreeably, even the Vulgate version, of which he is so tenacious, as we have observed, when at any time it furnishes him with a handle to insult and cavil at the sacred writers, or the heroes they celebrate, has here, 'They scoffed at him, saying, Ascend, thou bald, Ascend, thou bald,' whereas he, by his manner of expression, would lead us to think they threw out these words in mere unexceptionable gaiety and pleasantry of spirit.

Again, the Hebrew word נַגְנָרִים *nagnarim*, translated *children*, occurs, as is well known, concerning persons arrived to years of discretion: for Ishmael when he mocks Isaac, and could not be less than fifteen or sixteen years old; Isaac, when he carried the wood for the burnt-offering, and discoursed so rationally with his father in their journey to mount Moriah; Joseph, when he was seventeen years old, and kept the flocks of the family in the field; nay, when he interpreted the dreams of his fellow prisoners in Egypt, and was not much short of thirty; and Rehoboam, when he rejected the requests of his subjects, about granting an abatement of their burdens, in opposition to the more prudent advice of his father's old counsellors, are each called נַגְנָרִים *nag-*

nar or *child*, as our translation turns it often, Gen. xxi. 12. xxii. 5. xxxvii. 2. xli. 12, 46. 2 Chron. xiii. 7.—The sons of Eli also, when, by their rapacious and oppressive behaviour, they made the offering of the Lord to be abhorred; and Daniel, with his three companions, when they declined defiling themselves with the king's meat and drink, requesting that they might be tried with the use of pulse and water for ten days, and then be examined whether their countenance and form was not equal to theirs who partook of the delicacies of the royal table, are called בְּנֵי יַדְיָהּ or *children*, 1 Sam. ii. 17. Daniel, i. 17.

It is true, there is a term here added, which we render *little*. But even this does not so restrain the meaning of the word, as to warrant the stiling these persons, who cried out after Elisha, 'Innocents,' as if they were so young, that they could not distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, nor, by consequence, be chargeable with having contracted guilt before God. For the damsel who waited on Naaman's wife, and informed her of Elisha's ability to cure persons of the leprosy, has the same epithet of *little*, 2 Kings, v. 2. 'The Syrians had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife.' Solomon assumes this appellation of a 'little child' to himself, after his succession to the throne, and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, which could not be before he was twenty years of age, when he made supplication to God for wisdom and understanding to govern his people, 1 Kings, iii. 7.—Finally, Benjamin is called a 'little one,' Gen. xliv. 20. when he must

have been the father of several children, Gen. xlv. 21, These therefore whom the prophet called two she-bears to destroy, might be far above the age of innocence, and be prompted by their own profaneness and impiety, to ridicule him, instead of uttering expressions, of which they did not understand the meaning and intention, at the instigation of their parents*.

It scarce merits our attention, that he says in the next page †, ‘The *melk* or *petit* king of Samaria,’ while he does not give this name to the king of Judah; or to the king of Syria; only it is not easy to see the reason of his distinction, as the name מלך *melech*, which he pronounces *melk*, is common to them all in the Hebrew language, and the dominion of the king of Judah was rather less extensive than that of the king of Samaria, whom he graces with the title of *melk* or *petit*, that is, pitiful, puny king, as characteristic of him alone.—But surely it is of importance to examine his representation concerning Isaiah, when proceeding to the consideration of those customs of the Jewish prophets, which appear to us extravagant, he writes thus ‡, ‘The same ‘Isaiah walks quite naked in Jerusalem to signify ‘that the Egyptians shall be entirely stript by the

* I am sensible a late writer, Worthington, in his Evidences of Christianity deduced from facts, hath explained the word, here rendered ‘little,’ to mean ‘base, detestable,’ in Gen. ix. 29. arguing it might be taken in this moral sense, from its being used to signify *little* in quality, as well as quantity, Jerem. xlix. 15. and Obad. 2. But this does not appear of weight to persuade such an acceptance of it, wherefore I do not adopt it here.

† Page 206.

‡ Page 207. Thus also, in a note on his Treatise of Toleration, chap. 12. page 180. ‘We find the same prophet walking naked and

‘ king of Babylon. What? will it be said, is it possible that a man should walk quite naked in Jerusalem without being taken notice of by justice? ‘ Yes, certainly.’ And after this, he compares him for effrontery with Diogenes, with a set of Brachmans in India, and others, both in antient and modern times.

Now here, it is true, that Isaiah is said, in pursuance of a divine order, to have walked naked and barefoot three years, for a sign that the king of Assyria would carry away, in such condition, the Egyptians and the Ethiopians captives, *Isai. xx. 3.* But is our author’s comment just? To omit that many have thought this and like things were acted in vision, not in reality, it is by no means reasonable, on the literal scheme, to imagine that Isaiah appeared so long destitute of all raiment and apparel on his body. It is not likely God would enjoin an appearance thus indecent and unbecoming, who in his law had taken such care to prevent even the casual discovery of the nudity of his ministers during their religious offices, *Exod. xx. 26.*—Farther, it does not seem that such absolute nakedness would be necessary as an emblem or hieroglyphic of the disgrace to which these people should be subjected in their long removal; for it was never the custom for conquerors in war, to lead away captives into their distant territories, stripped of cloaths altogether, as indeed it was not consistent with their interest: since this required they should use every method to preserve

‘ barefoot, to shew that the king of Assyria shall lead away the Egyptians and Ethiopians captives, without their having wherewith to cover their nakedness.’

their bodies sound and healthful, instead of exposing them to the hazard of diseases by a tedious march, without any cover, amidst excessive cold or immoderate heat, and likewise that they should guard the females in their number, from the wanton abuse of their soldiers and fellow-prisoners, instead of inviting by such attitude the gratification of their lusts. Finally, among the Jews it was usual to call persons naked, who wanted the ordinary habit of their rank and station, though not wholly destitute of some robe or garment; so David is said to have danced naked before the Lord, at the solemnity of transferring the ark to Zion, yet it is recorded expressly, that he was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and had upon him also an ephod of linen, 2 Sam. vi. 14, 20: and 1 Chron. xv. 27, of which the former was an entire * vestment that reached down to the feet, and the latter according to † Josephus a garment that came down the length of a cubit from the shoulders. The meaning therefore of David's being naked, is no more than that he uncovered himself as a king, or laid aside the habit which he was accustomed to wear according to his quality. Nor was the phraseology peculiar to the Jews, but common also to the Greeks and Latins, as may be argued from the directions of Hesiod ‡ and Virgil, to plow naked, to sow naked, to reap naked; from Aelian's saying that § Gelo went forth naked into the market-

* Hence the Seventy Exod. xxxix. 23. and Josephus Antiq. 3. 7. 4—6. have translated it *εσλη ποδηρης*.

† Vide Joseph. ibidem.

‡ Hesiod Op. et Dies, v. 392. 'Γυμνον σπειρειν, γυμνον δε βωσταιν.' Virgil Georg. 1. 'Nudus ara, fere nudus.'

§ Var. Hist. 6. 11. 'Εἶτα ἐλθων εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν γυμνός.'

place, when he declared his readiness to abdicate the empire, which in another || passage is explained to have been with his tunic loose or ungirded; from Aurelius || Victor's account, that when the Romans sent to Cincinnatus, to bring him to be dictator, their messengers found him naked at his plough, since this appears only to signify, that he had thrown off his *toga* or upper-garment, wherefore † Livy says merely, he called for it, as indeed they had desired no more than that with his *toga* he would accompany them, and so he proceeded to wait on the senate; and to name no other authorities, from Suetonius's telling us, that when the people urged * Augustus with much earnestness to accept the dictatorship, he kneeled down, and throwing off his *toga* or gown from his shoulders, deprecated it with a naked breast. For these reasons we ought not to imagine, that Isaiah walked stark naked, but that he put off his upper garments as a token that the Assyrian monarch would carry away the Egyptians and Ethiopians without such a garb and habit, which indeed was an usual † treatment of captives.

|| Ibid. 13. 37. 'α?ωσω χιτῶνι.'

|| De Viris Illustribus, 'Quinctius dictator dictus, ad quem missi
' legati nudum eum arantem trans Tiberim offenderunt.'

† Lib. iii. 26. 'Ibi—operi, certe id quod constat, agresti inten-
' tus, salute data invicem redditaque, rogatus ut, quod bene verteret
' ipsi reipublicaeque, *togatus* mandata senatus audiret,—togam prope-
' re e tugurio proferre uxorem Raciliam jubet, qua simul, absterfo pul-
' vere ac sudore, velatus processit &c.'

* August. c. 50. 'Dictaturam, magna vi offerente populo, genua
' nixus, dejecta ab humeris toga, nudo pectore deprecatus est.'

† Instances of like use of the term *naked*, are thought to occur
John, xxi. 7. and Acts, xix. 16. Every one must also have observed,

As to his † assertion, ‘ That Jeremiah was only ‘ fourteen years of age when he received the Spirit,’ it hath no better foundation than his plea, that he was נַיִן *nagnar*, a child, when he would excuse himself from being employed by God as a prophet to the nations, Jerem. i. 6. but it hath been already proved, if I am not mistaken, that the term was applied to persons of still more mature age, in many places of Scripture; to which I now add Exodus, xxxiii. 11. where Joshua is so described, though he was twenty years old and upwards at the egress of the children of Israel from Egypt, Numb. xiv. 30.

When he says* again, ‘ Jeremiah directs the neighbouring kings to submit to the king of Babylon ‘ Nebuchadonosor, in whose favour he prophesies;’ How apt is this to convey to his readers a wrong idea! It is true, he foretells his prevalence against them, as he was the chosen instrument of divine providence for punishing their iniquities. But does he not also predict terrible judgments upon him, and the seat of his empire, and the people of his land, after the seventy years of the captivity of the Jews should be accomplished? See Jerem. xxiv. 12. &c. also chap. l. li.

that *nudus* in Latin, and *γυμνός* in Greek, are used concerning persons who are ill-clothed, or whose raiment is worn out and tattered, as in Tacitus De More Germanorum, c. 20. Curtius, 9. 3. Matt. xxv. 36. James, ii. 15. hence Seneca’s observation, De Beneficiis, lib. 5. c. 13. ‘ Quaedam etiamsi vera non sint, propter similitudinem eodem ‘ vocabulo comprehensa sunt; Sic—illiteratum non ex toto rudem, ‘ sed ad literas altiores non perductum. Sic qui male vestitum et pat- ‘ nosum vidit, nudum se vidisse dicit.’ And indeed we use the term *naked* with the same latitude in our own language.

† Phil. of Hist. p. 208.

* Phil. of Hist. p. 208.

He was then far from prophesying only things conducive to the king of Babylon's interest, and agreeable to his wishes, as one hired and bribed by him would have done.

In the last paragraph of this 43d chapter, which hath detained us now long; we meet, I think, with a mistake about God's order to Hosea, 'He commands 'Hosea to wed an adulteress, who was beloved by 'another, as the Lord loves the children of Israel, who 'pay respect to foreign gods, and who love the skin 'of the grape, chap. 3.'

For the genuine sense appears to be, that he should express love to a woman, 'beloved' not by a stranger, but, 'by her friend' and companion, the associate of her bed, that is her husband, as *Y⁷ rang* is taken Jerem. iii. 20. Cantic. v. 16. 'yet an adulteress,' notwithstanding this additional engagement, from tender affection on the part of her husband, 'according 'to the love of Jehovah toward the children of Israel, 'who turn to other gods, and love,' not the skin, as Mr. Voltaire has it without any authority, but, as the word is turned every where else, 'flagons of grapes,' 2 Sam. vi. 19. 1 Chron. xvi. 3. Cantic. ii. 5. that is, of wine, the juice thereof; by which description is signified in general, their affection to those idolatrous feasts which were celebrated in the idol-temples upon their sacrifices, Judges, ix. 17. Amos, ii. 8. 1 Cor. x. 7—21. The prophet then is bid shew kindness toward a woman, probably his own spouse, from whom he had for some time sequestered himself on

† See Volt. Phil. of Hist. page 211.

† So Virgil uses *grapes* for *wine*. Georg. i. 9.

'Poculaque inventis Acheloia miscuit uvis.'

account of her adultery, against all the ties and obligations upon her to fidelity, arising from his ardent attachment ; and this he is enjoined to do, to denote God's tenderness for the people of Israel, notwithstanding their falseness to him, and violation of their covenant with him, by the worship of false gods, which is often styled adultery in Scripture, by allusion to the conjugal relation, it represents to have subsisted between them.

But though this seem the genuine sense, as his interpretation of the former part of the verse hath some learned advocates, we do not accuse him therein of malicious misrepresentation.

SECTION XVIII.

Of his enumeration in chapter forty-seventh of popular prejudices to which the sacred writers conformed,—That the Scripture calls the rainbow the ark of God,—That Moses erected a brazen serpent, a God whose look cured,—That Christ says, new wine should never be put into old casks, —That Paul says, the seed is not quickened except it die,—and that Christ grants the Pharisees dispossessed devils.

I NOW pass over to his forty-seventh chapter, 'Of popular prejudices, to which the sacred writers have deigned to conform through condescension.' Here there is room for many animadversions ; but I satisfy myself with the following.

He * says, ' The Scripture calls the rainbow the ark of God, the sign of alliance.' But where does

it receive this title? God indeed is introduced saying, 'I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token of a covenant between me and the earth,' viz. that I will not destroy it any more with a flood, which is in the Vulgate 'Arcum meum ponam in nubibus.' But how ridiculous to pretend the Scripture calls this rainbow the ark of God, which every one knows denotes that coffer wherein the tables of the law were deposited, and over which the Shechinah or splendor, that was the symbol of the divine presence, resided first in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple? For this there is no better handle, than that the first is in the Latin translation styled *arcus*, and the last † *arca*, while the names of the one and the other, are as different in the original as כֶּשֶׁת *keseth* and אֲרוֹן *aron*. What scholar must not be amazed at such misrepresentation!

Again † how inexcusable his assertion, 'Moses erected a god, a brazen serpent, whose look cured those who had been bit with serpents;' For what is there in the history to countenance this wild charge? There we read, that Moses interceded with God at the request of the people, that the fiery serpents which wounded them to death in great numbers, might be taken away; hereon God directed him to make the likeness of one of these serpents in brass, and set it upon a pole, with a promise that whoever should after any hurt from these animals look upon it should recover. In conformity to this order, Moses framed

† Only it may be observed, the word for the rainbow in the French version is *arc*, and the word for the ark of the testimony, the ark of Noah, is *arche*.

and erected it in the camp, and it had this expected virtue and efficacy. But what reason did that give our author to say, he erected a God? None at all surely.—If the people in a succeeding period of great corruption, when Moses was long dead, worshipped or burnt incense to this brazen serpent, 2 Kings, xviii.

4. (for the same was it seems still preserved among them, as might be supposed indeed, concerning such a monument and mean of divine mercy toward their ancestors,) it is most absurd to impute, by such an expression, this abuse of it to him, in whose writings we do not read either the requirement or performance of such honour to it, but on the contrary, the most express prohibition of making any image of any object whatever for worship, and this enforced by the most tremendous and awful sanction.—Mr. Voltaire himself * is so honest elsewhere as to say, ‘ Tho’

* We have had occasion to observe already, that he is sometimes a little inconsistent with himself. In this Treatise chap. 30. page 138, he says, ‘ Solomon placed two cherubims in the temple. But these cherubims were not look’d upon as Gods,’ which is very true; yet in his essay ‘ Of the Jews,’ which is to be found in the book called his Dialogues and Essays Literary and Philosophical, p. 62. he represents ‘ The two cherubims at Jerusalem, to have been consecrated like the ‘ two calves at Sichem;’ though it is said of these very calves at Sichem, that Jeroboam on their erection said unto the people, ‘ Behold thy ‘ Gods (thy God) O Israel ! which brought thee up out of the land of ‘ Egypt,’ and sacrificed unto them, 1 Kings, xii. 28, 32.

In the same manner chap. 42. p. 198. he says, ‘ Never were the ‘ Jews more attached to their law, than under the kings of Syria. They ‘ no longer adored foreign divinities,’ yet in two lines after he says, ‘ They were nevertheless more unhappy than ever, always in expectation of being delivered by the promises of their prophets, by the assistance of their gods, but abandoned by Providence, whose decrees are ‘ unknown to man.’ What contradictions are these ! What shameful

‘ this serpent was made to cure the bite of real serpents, it was not however adored.’ It is true in the place just † quoted, he leaves also ground for complaint of his disingenuity ; for he insinuates, that making this serpent was a violation of the divine law, ‘ Moses notwithstanding the divine law, which forbade the making the representation of men or animals, erected a brazen serpent, which was an imitation of the silver serpent carried by the Egyptian priests in procession ;’ But how foolish the cavil ! To omit, that whatever Moses did here, he did by order of Jehovah, who could not be under any restraints from the rules he had prescribed to his creatures, it is plain from the general scope, and most natural construction of the second precept in the decalogue itself, that the making an image or figure of any thing was only condemned by it in this precise and determinate view, of making it to be worshipped ; and the reason annexed ‘ I am a jealous God,’ doth only suit with this exposition of it : for where is the conclusiveness and force of the argument against making images for other purposes, though it has irresistible energy against making them to be prostrated unto, and to receive religious adoration ? †

marks of carelessness ! The cherubims not looked upon as gods, and yet consecrated like the calves which Jeroboam stiled gods,—The Jews no longer adoring foreign divinities, and yet looking for deliverance by the assistance of their gods, though Jehovah was their alone God, so that any on whom they relied, besides him, must have been strange gods.

† See Phil. of Hist. chap. 30. p. 138.

† As to his fancy, that it was an imitation of the silver serpent, carried by the Egyptian priests in procession, I wish he had given us a particular account what led him to entertain it ; I do not believe

Farther, is it not most spiteful and malicious in him to represent, that the Saviour himself, in conformity to vulgar prejudices, says, 'That new wine should * never be put into old casks?' Does not almost every person of any literature know that his

he hath the authority either of Sir John Marsham or Dr. Spencer for it, as ingenious and fertile as each of these learned persons was, in discoveries of this sort. Probably he borrowed it from Dr. Middleton, who after he hath said that 'The making the golden calf was nothing else but recalling the worship of the Egyptian god Apis, represented always under that form,' adds 'And the setting up the brazen serpent seems to have been done in condescension to the same humour; being an object they had been used to reverence in Egypt; where from the Isiac table of Bembo, the obelisks and other Egyptian monuments, it appears that the image of a serpent erected in that manner on a pillar, had extraordinary honours and a superstitious veneration paid to it;' and then refers us to Pierius Valerianus in his *Hieroglyphica*, lib. 14. and to Eusebius in his *Præp. Evang.* lib. 1. cap. 10. for the truth hereof. See his Works, vol. 3. Letter to Dr. Waterland, page 33. Still however it must be regarded as an idle conceit, for all that is in Eusebius to the purpose is a quotation from Philo Byblius's translation of Sanchoniatho, (an author whom Dr. Middleton himself hath pronounced little worthy to ground any conjecture upon, *ibid.* page 27.) 'That the Egyptians after Taautus ascribed divinity to serpents, and called a figure of a serpent which had a hawk's head joined to it, *cneph*, and offered sacrifices, and celebrated festivals thereunto;' and as to his other authorities, all that looks favourable to his hypothesis either in the brazen Isiac table of Cardinal Bembo, (as it is engraven in Pignorius's book,) or in Pierius's volume, is, that serpents are there represented to receive worship. But surely there is no reason hence to affirm, that the erection of the brazen serpent to cure the Israelites, was an imitation of an Egyptian rite, whatever cause there may be afforded for suspicion, that this people in succeeding times, when they began to burn incense to it, were tainted with Egyptian manners. See Pignorii *Mensa Isiaca*, and pages 23, 26, 69, of his Commentary.

* Page 225.

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observation is, ‘Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out?’ nor can the truth of this be questioned, when it is considered that the term † translated *bottles*, did not signify in those ages and countries, vessels made of glass, such as we denote by that name, but budgets or bladders made of the hides of animals for containing liquors; for such old leathern budgets would be apt to rend and burst by the fermentation of new wine, to its entire loss and effusion.—No more is it difficult to defend the pertinence of it to our Saviour’s design, which was to shew, that weak and feeble virtue, should not have the most burdensome tasks, and difficult services imposed, lest it faint and be discouraged.

As little justice is there in his producing St. Paul’s expression there, as a condescension to vulgar errors, or prevailing false opinions, ‘That the seed which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die;’ for there is enough in the common appearance of nature to vindicate the remark, together with his application of it, for shewing it was possible that the dissolution of the body might be succeeded by its revival; since the grain we throw into the earth seems to rot

† The word *ασκος* is properly *ster*, a bladder; hence we read of *ασκοι*, or bladders made of goat-skin, ox-skin, &c. So Athenaeus Deipnosoph. lib. 5. p. 199. speaks of an *ασκος* or budget holding 3000 *μετρηται*, (each of which, according to Arbuthnot, contained two English gallons, and two pints) sewed of panther-skins, *ex παρδαλων δερματων ερραμμενος*. And Homer’s *Iliad*, iii. 246 247.

‘οινον ευφρονα καρπος αμυνης

‘*Ασχω εν αγγειω.*’

To name no more instances. By this account of their materials, light is thrown upon Joshua, ix. 13. and Ps. cxix. 83.

and putrefy, to waste and wither away, the external shell moistening and corrupting, ere it produce perfect corn, whatever vegetative quality may still lurk in it.

Finally, should not Mr. Voltaire* have considered, that there are Christian divines, who neither allow that the Pharisees in fact drove out devils like our Saviour, nor that he supposed them endowed with such an energy, in conformity to the popular prejudices of his place and day, when † he said, ‘ If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.’ Be it, that it would be doing violence to his words, either to explain them of the expulsion of evil spirits by prophets of their own nation long dead, because he seems to speak of the present display of such virtue, or to interpret them of the ejection of demons by his disciples, when he sent them before that, through the cities and villages of Judea, with power to dispossess them, in order to awake attention and procure credit to their doctrine, because it is not likely they would attribute such operations in them to a divine assistance, more than in their master, though indeed each of these senses hath its advocates; still we may very well suppose that our Lord, with-

* Page 227. The passage alluded to, runs thus, ‘ The Jews were at length so skilful in driving out devils, that our Saviour, who, according to St. Matthew, was himself accused of driving them out by the power of Beelzebub, grants the Jews the same power, and asks them if it is by means of Beelzebub, that they triumph over evil spirits?— If they had not this gift, Jesus conformed himself to the popular prejudices, in deigning to suppose that his implacable enemies had it, and prevailed over demons.’

† Matt. xii. 27.

out granting that any of the Pharisees really freed the bodies of men from the oppression of evil spirits, argues here with them upon their belief that they did, while they did not pretend that they owed this ability to Beelzebub, but looked upon it as the gift of God, and on this account tells them, that such men would furnish matter for their condemnation, by their so favourable opinion and honourable treatment of them beyond himself.

S E C T I O N XIX.

Animadversions on his forty-eighth chapter, where he writes, that Satan appears in Job master of the earth, subordinate to God; and that Satan is a Chaldaean word, and the Arimanius of the Persians.

IN the chapter which succeeds, our author treats of angels, genii, and devils of the antient nations, and amongst the antient Jews. He fails not however here also to afford reason for various censures of his work.

‘Satan,’ says * he, ‘appears in Job to be the master of the earth, subordinate to God.’ But is this true? all which appears from this book is, that he roves through the earth,—that he is disposed to detract from the virtue or excellence of a holy person,—that he can upon God’s licence, for the wise purposes of his government, bring ruin upon a good man’s family and estate, and inflict diseases upon his body,—and that he cannot work any hurt, or pro-

* Phil. of Hist. chap. 48. p. 231.

duce any mischief without or beyond such allowance. But surely this is not to make Satan master of the earth, subordinate to God, any more than it is to make a person master of Britain, subordinate to its monarch, to represent him rambling through it, and thereafter throwing out a malicious or spiteful insinuation against the honour and reputation of one of his loyal subjects; and then to exhibit him hereon permitted to create distress to him, in such and such articles, for the trial of the sincerity of his attachment to his sovereign: in consequence of which, he does, in these respects, and so far only, molest him without varying or exceeding. See Job, first and second chapters †.

He goes on, ‘ But is there a man a little versed in antiquity, who knows not that Satan is a Chaldaean word, that this Satan was the Arimanius of the Persians, adopted by the Chaldaeans, the evil spirit that prevailed over men?’

Yet that Satan written with a *sin* שטן, under which form alone it is the subject of our enquiry, because in this only does it occur through the Bible concerning the prince of fallen angels, is a Chaldaean

† Was it not then very scandalous in Mr. Voltaire, when he confesses as here, ‘ Satan seems to be in subordination to the Lord,’ after he hath said, ‘ This book—represents Satan—as wandering over the earth, and asking permission of the Lord to afflict Job,’ almost with the same breath to add as an inference from it, ‘ That so much of the universe as was then known, was in some measure Manichean,’ yet so he does in this same treatise, chap. 7. p. 25. But does not every one know, that the Manicheans held two uncreated independent principles, of contrary dispositions, the one good, the other evil, but of equal power and coordinate force ?

word, there is no evidence; as plain as it is that it is such when written with a *samech*, שָׁמֶךְ. It is, indeed, incontestably an Hebrew noun, which signifies an adversary or enemy in general. Hence, a human opposer is often called Satan, 1 Kings, v. 4. xi. 14, 23, 25. 1 Sam. xxix. 4. 2 Sam. xix. 22. Yea, the good angel, who withstood Balaam's prosecution of his journey to gratify Balak, king of Moab, by imprecating evil upon Israel, hath this name given him, Numb. xxii. 22. 'The angel of the Lord stood in the way, for a Satan or adversary unto him,' and again ver. 32. 'I came out, says he, to be a Satan or adversary unto thee;' as the root again or verb from which it is derived, denotes to oppose, to resist, to withstand, Ps. xxxviii. 20. lxxi. 13. cix. 4. xx. 29. Zechar. iii. 1.—Very naturally, therefore, might that malignant spirit, who is the great enemy of the glory of God, and the happiness of man, receive this appellation in an eminent manner. Accordingly he is marked by it, not only* in 1 Chron. xxi. 1. and Zechar. iii. 1, 2. which books were written after the captivity, but even in Ps. cix. which was composed, according to the title in our bibles, and the testimony of the apostle Peter, by David, consequently, some hundred years before it; for in the sixth verse of this psalm, as Mr. Voltaire him-

* 'And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number the people,' Le Clerc turns it, 'An enemy rose up against Israel,' an evil counsellor, one who had a malicious intention, or at least who gave hurtful and pernicious advice. But there is no example of such an acceptation of the word Satan, while the person's name who is so characterised, is suppressed; for as to 2 Sam. xix. 22. and Matt. xvi. 23. they do not come up to this.

self sets it down, in his forty-fourth chapter ‘ Of the prayers of the Jews,’ we have these words, ‘ Let Satan stand at his right-hand;’ and indeed his character is described, though the name is not recorded in Ahab’s time, 1 Kings, xxii. 21. &c. Not to insist that the term *Satan* is found again and again in this meaning in the book of Job, because its age is still much disputed.

As to ‘ Satan’s being the Arimanius of the Persians, adopted by the Chaldeans.’ I own the Persians had an evil daemon, whom they called Ahari-man or Ahriman, and the Greeks Arimanius; but that, about the time of the captivity, which our author makes the era of the Jewish faith in devils, they held the same notions concerning him which are delivered in the sacred books, is not so clear. According to Plutarch * and Theopompus, they maintained there were two principles in the universe, the one the author of all good, the other the original of all evil, who had no beginning of existence more than the former, though he would at last perish, and who continually produced vice and misery in the world, in opposition to his benevolent purpose and pleasure, through an equal and co-ordinate ability. And though we should admit, that herein they departed from their primitive sentiments, viz. that the

* Plutarch. de Isid. et Osirid. page 369. Νομίζουσι γὰρ οἱ μὲν θεὸς εἶναι δυο, καθάπερ ἀντιτεχνεῖς, τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἀγαθόν, τοῖς δὲ φανταῶν δημιουργόν, &c. Ibid. 370. Θεοπόμπος δὲ φησὶ, κατὰ τὴν μάχην, τρισχίλια ἐτη μαχεῖσθαι, καὶ πολεμεῖν, καὶ ἀναλύνειν τὰ τῷ ἑτέρῳ θεῷ τοῖς ἑτέροις, &c. In like manner, Laertius speaking of the Persians says, Prooem. Segm. 8. p. 6. Δυοὶ κατ’ αὐτοὺς εἶναι ἀρχαί, ἀγαθὸν δαίμονα καὶ κακόν.

evil principle was created, and dependent, and liable to controul, as the Persian historians would lead to think, still this corruption in belief must have been prevalent among them about the time of the captivity. For Zoroaster * or Zerdusht, who, they pretend, corrected the errors that had crept † into their religion, and taught that the good principle alone was self-existent, and supreme in might, and that light and darkness, happiness and misery, virtue and vice, were continually mixed in this scene, not through any impotence in him to restrain the evil being, but because it was his will they should be so blended, lived only in the reign of Gushtap or Darius Hytaspes, after the Jews were released from bondage, and gone back to their own land; yea, he is even represented to have been servant and disciple of Ozeira a Jewish prophet, by whom Dr. Hyde understands Ezra; and suitably to this we may observe, that God in the prophecy concerning Cyrus, who was to proclaim liberty of return to the Jewish nation, declares, as aiming to correct and extirpate such erroneous and false opinions prevalent among his subjects, ‘ I form the light and create darkness, I make good and

* There may indeed have been two Zoroasters, one long prior to Darius Hytaspes, another coeval with him, as Prideaux granted, thro’ the weight of Mr. Moyle’s arguments, when he attacked the account he had given of Zoroaster, in his *Connexion of the History of the Old and New Testament*, and as Pliny judged, many centuries before, *Nat. Hist.* 30. 1. However, while the former was the founder of the magic sect, the latter, the reformer thereof, and the Zerdusht of the Persians, flourished in the reign of that Darius, about A. M. 3490.

† See Pocock in *Specim. Historiæ Arabum*, p. 147, 148. and Hyde *Hist. Religionis Vet. Persarum*, cap. 9. p. 163. and 22. p. 299. and compare *Univ. Hist.* 1. 66. and 5. 387.

‘ send evil,’ *Isaiah*, xlv. 7. How contrary therefore the faith which reigned among the Persians in this period, whether it was their original one or not, to the doctrine of Scripture, that Satan does no hurt or mischief without God’s leave!

Whereas, he says farther, that the Chaldeans had adopted notions about Arimanius, similar to the Scripture ones about Satan, from the Persians, they could never learn them from them, when they were themselves unacquainted with them. The most probable season of their deriving any religious sentiments from the Persians, is that in which they subdued them, and became their masters; which was not till the eve of the Jews dismissal from Babylon. But then they could not receive them from them, and instill them into the minds of the captive Israelites, for those very Persians, it now appears, were strangers to them till long after.

From the whole, the reader may perceive, how ill-founded Mr. Voltaire’s assertion here is, and how groundless also another paragraph some pages after, but in this same chapter, is, when he writes, ‘ It is therefore certain, that the Jews acknowledged no devils, till about the time of their captivity in Babylon. They borrowed this doctrine from the Persians, who had it from Zoroaster. These facts cannot be disputed, except by ignorance, fanaticism, or want of candour.’

SECTION XX.

Of his asserting in the same chapter, that some have imagined Enoch left a written history of fallen angels,—That the false Enoch is cited by St. Jude, —and that the book of Enoch and Genesis agree perfectly in the copulations of the sons of God with the daughters of men, and in the race of giants their issue.

TO proceed with our detection of fallhood, Mr. Voltaire in the same * chapter having quoted a passage from the epistle of Jude thus, ‘ And the angels which
 ‘ kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.
 ‘ Wo unto them, for they have gone in the way of
 ‘ Cain; and Enoch also, the seventh from Adam,
 ‘ prophesied of these saying, Behold the Lord cometh
 ‘ with ten thousand of his saints;’ he adds, ‘ It has
 ‘ been imagined by some, that Enoch left a written
 ‘ history of the fallen angels.’

But who are those some, who have expressed such a fancy about Enoch, and what arguments have they offered to persuade us of it? Indeed Jude produces Enoch’s words at so great a distance from the account he gives of the punishment of rebellious angels, that I should wonder much if any have pretended to build this conceit, that Enoch wrote a history of the lapse of angels before the formation of man, upon his epistle. For, though the relation of the

vengeance executed upon these disobedient spirits, and the mention of this antediluvian patriarch's prophecy are by our author quoted from it, as standing in most close and intimate connection, there do really intervene between them seven verses, in which the apostle represents the destruction of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven, describes the evil practices of some corrupt Christians, in despising dominion and speaking evil of dignities, reproves them by Michael's temperance of speech, when he contended with the devil about the body of Moses, and to omit other things, denounces a wo unto them, for their resemblance unto Cain, Balaam, and Core. When therefore he says at last, 'And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these,' it is manifest from the coherence, that the persons against whom he affirms him to have prophesied, cannot be fallen angels, but must be licentious professors of the gospel; nor can it create any difficulty, that the apostle says Enoch prophesied against them, since his words, though spoken at first concerning the ruin of the ungodly world by the flood, are applicable to the punishment which will be inflicted upon such wicked Christians, at the final appearance of our Lord; and it is agreeable to the stile of the sacred writers upon other occasions to use such phraseology, where a prophet's words may be accommodated to an event, though it was not intended by him at the time of pronouncing them. So little reason is there for building an opinion, that Enoch left a written history of the fallen angels, upon any thing which Jude hath said concerning him in his letter.

A little after, he takes it for granted 'That the 'false Enoch is cited by St. Jude;' but I see no reason to allow, that Jude quoted the prophecy from that book which is called 'The Revelation of Enoch,' though some antient Christians thought so, and made it a reason for rejecting the authority of this epistle, as the book appeared an idle romance. Is it pleaded, though the book appear evidently spurious, both because it is too express about many Christian principles and facts for Enoch's age, and because it contains a variety of shameful and ridiculous trifles, unworthy to have proceeded from him, Jude might have quoted it, aware that in this point of the prophecy it contained a true relation, without giving any sanction or authority to the whole, just as the apostle Paul cites some sentences from Aratus and Epimenides heathen poets, without approving the entire pieces from which they are brought? Be it so; but then there is no other evidence that this book under Enoch's name was extant in the days of the apostles, and it is certain that Jude's expression here will never prove it; for he might have used it, though the oracle was neither committed to writing by Enoch himself, nor recorded in a book by any other person, but only conveyed down by oral tradition, as the names of the two magicians Jannes and Jambres are supposed to have been, when Paul mentions them in his second epistle to Timothy. At the same time it is not unlikely, that the apostle took them * from

* See Sherlock's first Dissertation after his Discourse on the Use and Intent of Prophecy, p. 189. Lardner's Credib. vol. 10. p. 133, 138. and Fabricii Codex Pseudepigraph. Vet. et Novi Testamenti tom. 2.

some Jewish book filled with stories about Enoch, but soon after† lost, which might give rise to some Christian's forgery of that book under Enoch's name, that was known to Irenaeus, Origen, and others who were their contemporaries, and may be seen, so far as it hath been preserved, by consulting Fabricius.

In a note again, upon his concession ‘ that the
‘ false Enoch cited by St. Jude, is acknowledged to
‘ be forged by a Jew;’ Mr. Voltaire observes, ‘ This
‘ book of Enoch must nevertheless be of some anti-
‘ quity, for we find it frequently quoted in the tes-
‘ tament of the twelve patriarchs, another Jewish
‘ book, corrected by a Christian of the first century,

† The same account may be given concerning the passage of Michael's quarrel with the devil about the body of Moses, which we read in Jude's epistle; concerning which Mr. Voltaire says, ‘ It is only in
‘ an apocryphal book, intitled, The Analysis of Moses, quoted by O-
‘ rigen in the third book of his *Principii*,’ Phil. of Hist. page 237. he should have said, the Analepsis or Anabasis of Moses, which is mentioned by Origen in his treatise *Περί αρχων*, or ‘ De Principiis,’ 3. 2. and by others after him. Origen there, according to Rufinus's translation, says, ‘ I own, the apostle Jude quotes this book,’ ‘ De quo, in
‘ ascensione Moſis cujus libelli meminit in epistola ſua Judas apoſtolus,
‘ Michael archangelus, &c.’ But the apostle might in like manner have it from some Jewish book, or some tradition about things which happened to Moses. At the same time we can say little about the age of this Analepsis or Anabasis, because we have scarce any fragment of it besides. Dr. Lardner however is of opinion, that Jude refers in this passage about Michael, to the vision in Zechar. iii 1, 3. and might call the Jewish people the body of Moses, as St. Paul calls Christians the body of Christ. See his Supplement to his Credibility, vol. 3. page 340, &c. where he also animadverts upon the bishop of London's opinion, that some passages in Jude's epistle and Peter's second letter are taken from some Hebrew writers.

Sed Vide vitam Moſis Rabbiniſcam a doctiſſimo gaulonino vulga-

‘ and this testament of the twelve patriarchs is even
 ‘ quoted by St. Paul in his first epistle to the Thessa-
 ‘ lonians, if repeating the page word for word can
 ‘ be called quoting it. In the sixth chapter of the
 ‘ patriarch Reuben we find “ The scholar of God at
 “ length fell upon them,” which St. Paul says *ver-*
 ‘ *batim.*’

But how inconclusive any quotation herein, for evincing that the book under Enoch’s name had a being in Jude’s time, though with this view the remark seems to be made!—Most learned men are of opinion, that this piece, the Testaments of the twelve patriarchs, which is just a collection of their dying words, consisting partly of predictions of future events, and partly of rules of holiness, is a work of the second century, as Dodwell, Lardner*, and others. If therefore their hypothesis be true, the quotation of Enoch’s book herein, comes much too late for proving its existence during the life of an apostle, But let it be supposed, according to our author after Grabe, that it was written by some Jew before our Saviour’s time, and afterwards interpolated in some places by a Christian of the first century, foolishly zealous to verify, by some clear passages, some things said in the New Testament, which were not found in the antient books generally received by the Jews as canonical, still it will not establish the being of Enoch’s book so early; for such references to Enoch’s book, for any thing he can tell, may not be among the genuine and original passages of the book, but among those which are allowed to have been foisted in to serve some turn: as this adulteration or corrup-

* See his Credib. part 2. vol. 2. p. 741.

tion of the work again may have happened after the death of our apostle, which is placed many years before the first century expired. Indeed no sure conclusion can be drawn from the use of Enoch's book, in the piece called, the Testaments, &c. to its appearance in Jude's time, but upon the supposition that it is the pure and unaltered production, if not of Enoch himself as Mr. Whiston contends, yet of some Jew who wrote before the apostle; than which what more unreasonable, since it speaks with a fullness and clearness upon the subjects of the New Testament beyond all the writers of the Old?

And as to the assertion that ' This Testament is ' quoted by St. Paul in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, if repeating the page word for word can ' be called quoting it,' I find no such agreement as he speaks of. Yet, if there was, it would be more reasonable to think the author borrowed from St. Paul, than he from him, as these Testaments were evidently written, or at least interpolated, by some person who lived after the publication of the Christian religion in the world. Even the alone expression he professes to produce out of the work in the sixth chapter of Reuben, is not to be met with either there or in any other part of it, so far as I can perceive; I only observe in the sixth chapter of Levi's testament a sentence which occurs in the first * epistle to the Thessalonians, and which hath some likeness to that which Voltaire here recites. For it is there said, ' And the wrath of the ' Lord came upon him to the uttermost.' But if this was intended, I must think it a very poor support of his assertion: for if it is needful to suppose it copied

* 1 Thess. ii. 16.

at all, it is more likely the author transcribed it from Paul, whose epistles he certainly had seen, than that Paul took it from this book, which there is no evidence he was acquainted with. On the other hand, were the words ‘The scholar of God’ there, they might seem rather an allusion to Isaiah, liv. 13. ‘All thy children shall be taught of the Lord,’ than to 1 Thess. iv. 9. ‘Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.’

There still remains one passage in this chapter to be considered. Mr. Voltaire having quoted * Genesis chap. vi. ‘There were giants in the earth in those days; and even after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same became mighty men, which were of old men of renown;’ he subjoins, ‘Both the book of Enoch and Genesis perfectly agree in regard to the copulations of these angels or sons of God with the daughters of men, and also as to the race of giants their issue.’

But is this fair and candid? It is true the apocryphal book of Enoch says, ‘The watchers, (so the angels of God are there called) lusted after the daughters of men, and went astray after them.’ For which reason, had I been sure this was all he intended above, where he said, ‘Some have imagined Enoch left a history of the † fallen angels,’ I should have made no

* Pages 235, 236.

† How consistently he adds after the place last quoted, p. 236. ‘But neither this book of Enoch, nor any one of the Old Testament mentions a syllable of the war of the angels against God, their defeat, their descent into hell, nor their enmity to mankind,’ let the reader judge.

objection to it; but the account in the book of Genesis bears only, 'that the sons of God בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים *Be-ne Elohim* saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose.' This indeed Josephus and Philo Judaeus understand to signify, that the angels (who, it is owned, are sometimes styled, sons of God, in Scripture, Job, i. 6. ii. 1. xxxviii. 7.) had intercourse with women, and procreated children by them;—so do also Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Lactantius, and other fathers of the Christian church, interpret it. Nay one copy of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, the Alexandrian I mean, reads in the text, the angels of God, instead of the sons of God, which probably had much greater influence than the authority of Philo and Josephus, with these antient Christians, to make them * adopt this sense as the true one, (if at least the copy in common use among them did so exhibit the text,) as all of them held that version in great esteem, and few of them understood Hebrew. Nevertheless, it is not reasonable to put this meaning on the words of the sacred historian, whether they be supposed, according to some, to relate to the conduct of the angels, who had already lost their innocence, and risen in rebellion against God, or whether they be supposed, according to others, to relate to the behaviour of the angels that continued pure and holy, till they were guilty of this enormity, having been sent down by Jehovah the common creator, to guard

* The authority of the book of Enoch, might also promote, with some who regarded it as canonical, this interpretation, as it related the story of the commerce of angels with women.

and protect mankind. For as Scripture teaches only one fall of angels, which was previous to the transgression of the first pair of our race, Adam and Eve, and to their expulsion from Paradise, so it is utterly repugnant to the notions we have of those beings, bad as well as good, who are of a spiritual and immaterial nature, to subject them to sensual desires, and to make them fall in love and lie with women. Add to this, that the universal deluge, in explaining the moral causes of which, this fact of the intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men is introduced, is never represented to have been sent for the punishment of wickedness in angels, but in men.

The expression, therefore, sons of God, hath by all in latter times or almost all, a different interpretation given of it. Some†, as אֱלֹהִים *Elohim*, is a noun in the plural number, and often taken for rulers, judges, or any great men, *Exod. xxi. 6.*

† This is Dr. William Wall's interpretation, in his critical notes on the Old and New Testament, who observes, that the word לָקַח is used of taking by violence, *Genesis, xxxiv. 2. Job, v. 5.* (Compare *Gen. xii. 15. xx. 2.*) It was also the sense of Aquila, who has υἱοῦ τῶν θείων, and of Symmachus, who has υἱοῖ τῶν δυναστευόντων, the sons of the princes or powerful. It is also the gloss of Onkelos, Ben Uzziel, Jarchi, Abenezra, and other Jewish doctors; the Samaritan and Arabic versions, finally, to omit some modern translations, do embrace it: nay, Mr. Voltaire himself declares for it, in a note on his *Treatise of Toleration*, chap. xiv. p. 221. where he says, 'In the sixth chapter of *Genesis*, we find the sons of great men called the sons of God,' and confirms this sense, 'by the use of cedars of God for tall cedars, fear of God for violent fear, wind of the Lord for a great tempest, among the Hebrews,' to which it were easy to subjoin many similar examples.

xxii. 8. 9. 28. Pf. lxxxii. 1. &c. and אֲדָמָה *Adam*, on the other hand, stands for mean men, men of low rank and condition, Pf. xlix. 2. *Isaiah*, ii. 9. expound, the sons of God, or, rather, the sons of gods, to denote the sons of powerful and wealthy men, and, the daughters of *Adam*, to signify the daughters of persons in humble circumstances; and say, those are related to have taken unto themselves the daughters of men, because they ravished or seized by force and violence the daughters of the inferior sort of people, and cohabited with them in a disorderly promiscuous way; thus becoming examples and leaders in debauchery and lewdness, they brought on with a quicker pace that consummate iniquity and degeneracy for which God sent on the earth the general flood. Others again, thinking this account makes the cause of the flood too narrow and particular, (for by it the guilt is altogether on the side of the grandees or princes) understand the sons of God, to express the male descendants of Seth's line, and, the daughters of men, to express the female descendants of Cain's race, each being thus denominated and distinguished from the piety or wickedness which prevailed in their respective families; so the sense will be, that the inter-marriage of the godly family sprung from Seth, with the wicked posterity of Cain, was one cause of hastening that universal profligacy and licentiousness of manners, for which God swept away all living with water, they themselves being soon corrupted by the conversation of their new relatives, instead of reclaiming and reforming the persons with whom they thus contracted alliance. And this, indeed, is the exposi-

tion most received: in favour of which it is urged, it is expressly remarked in the Bible, that so long before as the days of Enos *, Adam's grandson, men began to call themselves, or to be called by, the name of the Lord, Gen. iv. 26. that is, the family of Seth, who adhered to God and his worship, began to have a denomination significant of their regard to him, in opposition to the irreligious family of Cain.

Now from this mixture and conjunction of the sons of God with the daughters of men in the one sense or the other, according to Moses, sprung a generation of men of enormous violence and rapaciousness, if not also of extraordinary stature and strength, who acquired to themselves, by their oppression, a remarkable name. And they were a second race of this sort, for indeed Moses's words seem to imply, that there was such a race antecedent to this affinity and intercourse between the sons of God and the daughters of men which he speaks of, Gen. vi. 3. And is not either sense much more rational than that which Mr. Voltaire hath proposed as the certain and uncontroverted meaning of the passage, while, at the same time, it is very agreeable to the idiom of the Hebrews? He hath not then here dealt candidly and honestly.

* See Taylor's Scripture Divinity, page 176. Aquila turns this sentence, Gen. iv. 26. *Τότε ηρχθη τε καλεισθαι εν ονοματι Κυριου.* And the same phrase is used for calling by name, Numb. xxxii. 42. Isaiah, xlii. 7. xlii. 5. lxxv. 1. Ps. xlix. 12. There is, however, a great variety of sentiments about the import of that text, which I may not consider.—Compare Univ. Hist. vol. 1. page 160. and 170 —178. upon this section.

SECTION XXI.

Of his saying in the forty-ninth chapter of the same work, that the Jews, according to their own confession, were not circumcised till the time of Joshua; upon which occasion also, the assertion by this writer and others, that the Jews borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians, is examined.

MR. VOLTAIRE's forty-ninth chapter consists chiefly of some details from Philo and Josephus, which have been examined already. There is then only one assertion in it which falls now to be exposed, as a misrepresentation of the sense of Scripture.—Having † said ‘ And would it really be probable that ‘ the antient and powerful nation of the Egyptians ‘ should have adopted this custom’ (of circumcision, he means) ‘ from a little people whom they ‘ abhorred,’ he subjoins, ‘ And who, according to ‘ their own account, did not practise circumcision ‘ till the time of Joshua?’ But what shameful falsehood here? to tell the world that the Jews, according to their own confession, were not circumcised till the time of Joshua, when their sacred historian informs us, ‘ That all the males that came out of ‘ Egypt, and afterwards perished through disobedience to the word of the Lord, were circumcised, ‘ though their children that were born in the wilderness by the way were not circumcised;’ on which account the Lord commanded Joshua to circumcise them, after their passage of the Jordan, Josh. v. 2—7. And it is the clear sense of the writer, according to

† Page 239.

all manuscripts and versions, without exception.

For what reason the ceremony was omitted in the wilderness, we cannot say, unless it was because it would * have been dangerous to have travelled children, uneasy by their recent wound of circumcision, when yet against a sudden call to move from place to place, in such situation, there could be no security; and because the use of it would then be less necessary, as there was smaller danger of intermixture with other nations, during their abode in the desert. But whatever was the reason of its neglect then, it is certain it had been before practised by them, and was now only revived and renewed after forty years intermission or discontinuance, on their arrival in Canaan, at the approach of the

* Maimonides Moreh Nebochim, part 3. cap. 19. having said, 'Circumcision was a rite of such a nature, that no person would perform it upon himself or his children, but on account of religion,' gives this reason for his judgment, 'Nam non est levis aliqua cruris læsio, vel brachii adustio, sed res durissima et difficillima. For it is not a slight hurt of the leg. or burning of the arm, but a thing most harsh and uneasy.' Though, afterwards, to shew the propriety of circumcising in infancy, rather than in more mature age, he observes, that then the pain was smaller. So likewise Philo de Circumcis. page 810. speaks of circumcision as an operation attended with grievous anguish, *Μετα χαλεπωι αλγηδωνι*. It may even seem to have been hazardous to life. For Lightfoot, in his Exercitationes upon 1 Cor. vii. 19. (see his Works, vol. 2. page 760.) produces some passages from Rabbinical writings, in which mention is made of a man 'whose brethren had died of circumcision.' Nay, one from the Jerusalem Talmud itself, where R. Nathan says, 'There was a woman in Cesarea of Cappadocia, who had lost three sons successively by it.' And he himself asserts, that in such a case, the ceremony was omitted upon those that were born after. We may therefore be less surprized that its observation was laid aside during the pilgrimage of Israel in the wilderness.

passover, unto which feast no uncircumcised person might come at any time by their law, under pain of being cut off; as indeed it had, in the interval betwixt their departure from Egypt, and their entrance into Canaan, been, among other positive rites, re-injoined, Levit. xii. 2. So far is it from being true that it was then first begun or introduced among them, as our author would persuade his readers.

What moved Mr. Voltaire to give so palpably false an account of this matter, is not easy to perceive. It is true, he supposes the Hebrews first practised this rite, in imitation of their neighbours. For he says, in the fifth chapter † of this same Treatise, ‘ The Jews themselves, though they looked with horror upon the rest of men, which detestation increased with time, imitated the circumcision of the Arabs and Egyptians.’ And, as he intimates, they learned it from the Egyptians, in the chapter before us, where he likewise represents Josephus to affirm, that the Jews themselves confessed it, (how unjustly * hath been already shewed) so he dwells upon the conceit at greater length in his Philosophical Dictionary. For, having quoted a passage from Herodotus, of which presently, he adds ‡ ‘ It is clear from this passage of Herodotus, that several nations had taken circumcision from Egypt, but no nation has ever said, that they derived it from the Jews. To which then must the origin of this custom be attributed, to that nation, from whom five or six others acknowledge they hold it, or to another much inferior in power,

† Page 18.

* Part I. section 7. page 41.

‡ Article Circumcision, page 128.]

‘ less commercial, less military, hidden in a nook of
 ‘ Arabia Petrea, and which has never been able
 ‘ to introduce the least of its customs in any na-
 ‘ tion? The Jews say, that they were first received
 ‘ into Egypt by way of compassion and charity;
 ‘ now, is it not very probable, that the little people
 ‘ adopted a practice of the great people, and that
 ‘ the Jews joined in some of their masters cus-
 ‘ toms?’ But, notwithstanding this was his hy-
 pothesis, that circumcision was of more antient use
 among other nations than among the Israelites, he
 might, in perfect consistency with it, have allow-
 ed, as well as Sir John Marsham, Lord Shaftesbury,
 and others who embraced it, that the Jews practised
 that rite long before the days of Joshua, and their
 entrance into the promised land under his conduct.
 And, indeed, one would imagine this previous ob-
 servation of it by them was too manifest to be de-
 nied. For, we are told, Gen. xvii. 23—27. that A-
 braham circumcised Ishmael his son, and all the males
 that were born in his house, or bought with his mo-
 ney of any stranger, at the same time submitting to
 the rite himself; and again, Gen. xxi. 4. that he cir-
 cumcised his son Isaac: all which must have been
 transacted considerably more than 400 years before
 his posterity passed the Jordan. Further, we read that
 Jacob’s sons represented to Shechem, who had de-
 bauched their sister Dinah, and to Hamor his father,
 that every male of them was circumcised, when they
 pleaded, that these princes and their people should
 also undergo circumcision, ere they would agree
 to their proposal of inter-marriages with them;
 and that they, on the other hand, reasoned upon

their account of the fact as just, that they might reconcile their subjects to it, Gen. xxxiv. 13—24. which conversation seems to have been held more than 200 years before Joshua succeeded Moses as leader of the Jews.—And, finally, we saw from the words in the book of Joshua, a little ago produced, that all the males that came out of Egypt to go into Canaan through the wilderness, had endured this ceremony ere they removed thence. For which we may even bring Mr. Voltaire as a voucher*, as much as he contradicts himself in it.

Be the cause, however, what it will, of his gross misrepresentation, when he says, ‘The Jews, according to their own confession, were not circumcised till the days of Joshua, ‘It may be proper, upon this occasion, to shew, that the opinion of which he and

* Thus, in Philosophical Dictionary, same article, page 129. he writes, ‘The book of Joshua says, that the Jews were circumcised in ‘the desert.’ Of which I cannot perceive the truth, unless he admit, that the males of the nation born in Egypt were circumcised ere they left it. For the book of Joshua is express, that none of them, born during their pilgrimage in the desert, were circumcised. It cannot be denied, indeed, that thus Mr. Voltaire contradicts his own assertion in the forty-ninth chapter of his Philosophy of History, which we have made the subject of this section. Nay, his own words a little before, in that very place of the Dictionary. For they run, ‘The Jews acknowledge that they continued in Egypt 205 years; they say that ‘in all that time they were not circumcised.’ But this cannot be helped. We have seen he does not scruple to say and unsay things, as well as that he does not hesitate to throw out assertions concerning the Jews, in flat opposition to their own accounts in their sacred books, which is the case in the last cited clauses; and again a little after, when he says, page 130. ‘The circumcision of Abraham terminated ‘in himself; it was not till Joshua’s time his posterity underwent that ‘ceremony.

some others are so fond, that circumcision prevailed more early among the Egyptians and neighbouring nations than among Abraham's descendants, is destitute of all good foundation.

Account of the Heathen evidence upon which it is pretended, that circumcision among the Jews was of Egyptian original, with observations for destroying the force thereof.

By all who have contended, that the Jews borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians, Herodotus's words * are much urged; who tells us, 'That the Colchians, and Egyptians, and Ethiopians, are alone, of all men, circumcised from the beginning. That the Phenicians and Syrians, who are in Palestine, themselves confess they learned this rite from the Egyptians. But the Syrians who are about Thermodon, and the river Parthenius, and the Marcrones, who are their neighbours, say they learned it lately from the Colchians. For those alone are circumcised among men, and they appear to do it in the same manner with the Egyptians.' And then adds, 'But as to the Egyptians and Ethiopians, I cannot say which of them learned it from the other, for it seems of antient standing. Nevertheless, that it was introduced through intercourse with Egypt, this is to me a great proof, that those Phenicians who have commerce with Greece, do not imitate

* Lib. 2. cap. 104. (Edit. Steph. page 143.) the expression *απ' αρχης*, which I have rendered 'from the beginning,' Mr. Voltaire translates, 'from time immemorial.' Phil. Dict. page 127.

‘ the Egyptians in circumcising their children.’ Diodorus Siculus † also assigns to the same custom among the Jews an Egyptian original; for having considered the Jews as an Egyptian colony like the Colchians, he observes in support of this account, ‘ Therefore, among both these races, children were circumcised, the rite having been brought with them from Egypt.’ In like manner I shall allow, that Strabo * bears testimony to the derivation of

† Lib. 1. page 24. Edit. Rhodom. Διο καὶ παρα τοῖς γυναικὶν τούτοις ἐκ παλαιῶν παραδεδοσθαι, τὸ περιτεμεῖν τὰς γυναικείας παρθένους, ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετενηνεγμένον τὸ νόμιμον, and again in the same book speaking of the Colchians, ‘ Ὅτι δὲ τὸ τοῦ γένους Αἰγυπτιακοῦ ἐστὶ σημεῖον εἶναι τὸ περιτεμεῖσθαι τὰς ἀνθρώπους παραπλησίως τοῖς κατὰ Αἴγυπτον, διαμενοῦσιν τὸ νόμιμον παρὰ τοῖς ἀποικοῖς, καθάπερ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, ‘ That this race is Egyptian, there is an evidence ‘ in their circumcising men in like manner with the Egyptians, the ‘ custom continuing with the colonists, as also with the Jews.’

* Lib. 16. p. 760, 761. He indeed speaks of a prevailing report, that the Egyptians were the progenitors προφύρας of the Jews; yet he there represents circumcision to have been only introduced among them, through the influence of superstitious men, who came into the priesthood long after their settlement in Judea, and the death of Moses and his successors, instead of making it to have been carried with them from Egypt. Again, however, p. 824, treating of the Egyptians he says, according to Xylander’s Latin translation, ‘ Id de maxime laudatis eorum moribus est, quod omnem prolem educant, circumcidunt etiam mares, et feminas excidunt, quod Judæis est legitimum, qui origine sunt Aegyptii,—Καὶ τὸ περιτεμεῖν, καὶ τὰ θήλειά ἐκτεμεῖν, ὅπερ καὶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις νόμιμον, καὶ οὗτοι δὲ εἰσιν Αἰγυπτῖοι τὸ ἀνεκαθεν. Should any think he intended to say, the Jews had derived the practice he attributes to them with relation to females, from their Egyptian extraction, rather than circumcision, since he had before said, it was brought in by superstition in a later age; it may be answered, perhaps he meant by ὅπερ here that περιτεμεῖν, as well as ἐκτεμεῖν θήλειά was lawful to the Jews, and the fruit of their being origin-

this ceremony among the Jews from the Egyptians, because he makes them their descendants, whatever room there may appear for disputing it. Celsus, again, two centuries after, is express that the ceremony was practised by the Egyptians ere it was received among the Jews, and then † remarks, ‘They were not more holy through the use of it, than other people who in like manner performed it.’ To the same purpose, finally, speaks ‡ Julian, ‘Those men, (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,) being Chaldeans of the sacred and priestly race, learned indeed circumcision, having sojourned with the Egyptians.’ Such is the heathen evidence from which it is concluded, that circumcision was in previous use among the Egyptians.

But surely the authority of those writers should not be sufficient to persuade us, that it was an Egyptian rite, antecedent to God’s appointment of it unto Abraham and his posterity, as a token of the covenant between him and them, and to its immediate observation among them thereon; for they are all of an age much too late to be depended on as safe guides about the point, since Herodotus flourished almost a thousand, and the oldest of the other four more than 1400 years after that event. What tho’ the most antient, and in this respect the most credible of them, had such information as he gives us, from the priests of Egypt? (for from them he declares he

ally Egyptians, because he had mentioned both among Jewish customs, I have therefore ranked him among the heathen witnesses to the rise of circumcision among the Jews from Egypt, p. 761.

† Origen adv. Cels. lib. 5. p. 259.

‡ Cyrill. adv. Julian, lib. 10. p. 254.

received all his knowledge† of the affairs of that country,) it doth not therefore follow, that the Egyptians, with the Ethiopians and Colchians, were the only people on earth who practised circumcision from the beginning, and who taught it the rest of mankind; for the heathen nations in general, and the Egyptians in particular, were ready to arrogate a far higher antiquity* than in truth belonged to them, and that they might justify such pretensions, to represent certain usages as of very long continuance among them, which had been but of recent establishment. Yea, what though he committed no mistake, in affirming as he does, that the Syrians in Palestine owned they adopted circumcision from the Egyptians, which yet all will not admit? Might not these Syrians in Palestine be the Samaritans, who, notwithstanding they conformed in many things to the Mosaic ritual, in order to avert the displeasure of the God of the land, were always unwilling to be thought to have any connection with the Jews, when this people was in distress? for thro' this temper it is easy to see, they would be ready to derive their performance of the ceremony from the Egyptians or any Gentile nation, rather than confess it was borrowed from the Jews, however false such account of its rise among them might be in fact: and is it not the more probable, these Syrians in Palestine, whom he mentions, were that mixed people, (composed at first partly of the remnant of the ten tribes of

† Herodot. lib. 2. cap. 46.

* What lies they told about this may be seen in the same book of Herodotus, for instance, they said that from their first king to Sathon was an interval of more than 11000 years.

Israel, and partly of the heathen colonies which the kings of Assyria planted there from remote parts of their dominion,) if it be considered, that they occupied a greater portion of the country than the Jews, whom he never † speaks of by name at all; and that it is altogether unlikely any Jews * would ever make such an acknowledgment as he ascribes to those Syrians, that they learned circumcision from the Egyptians?

Moreover, many other things concur, to lessen the weight of these testimonies, in favour of the more early practice of circumcision among the Egyptians than among the descendants of Abraham, and to evince that we cannot reasonably argue from them,

† It is allowed by Sir John Marsham himself, that Herodotus, (who was born about the beginning of Xerxes's reign,) scarce knew the name of the Jews, they having only returned, a short time before his travels, from being captive in Babylon, Canon Chronic. 4to. p. 150. Supposing therefore the Jews, strictly so called, had been intended by him where he says, The Syrians in Palestine confess they learned circumcision from the Egyptians, (as indeed Josephus applies the passage to them without scruple, because it served his purpose against Apion; See part 1. sect. last,) much regard could not have been due to his relation of their accounts about the original of the rite, when his acquaintance with them is allowed to have been so lame and imperfect.

• Diodorus Siculus makes the Jews, on their expulsion from Egypt and settlement in the country about Jerusalem, to have enacted rites wholly different from the rest of mankind, through their abhorrence of them, as will appear afterwards; which must particularly hold with regard to the Egyptians, who he says drove them out of their country as impious and hated by the gods; now this does not look like borrowing circumcision from the Egyptians, and then acknowledging it. Tacitus likewise says Hist. 5. 4. 'Moses, that he might attach the nation to himself for ever, appointed them new rites, contrary to the rest of men; there all things are profane which we esteem sacred, and all things on the other hand are permitted among them, which to us are unlawful.'

that the Egyptians were examples and instructors to the Jews in the use of it.

The Greek and Latin historians universally, even they who lived after greater freedom of intercourse with the Jews was opened by the success of the Macedonian and Roman arms, and after greater advantages were thereby enjoyed for more accurate and exact information about them, have fallen into so gross blunders, when they treat of the affairs of this nation, as forbid our implicate and secure reliance upon them, when they pretend to say how or whence circumcision obtained among them. For the truth of this, I may appeal to all who are acquainted with Trogius Pompeius as epitomized by Justin, with Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Tacitus, to omit others. For, are we not told by one or other† of these authors, that Moses was an Egyptian priest, and that he built Jerusalem with its temple, having taken possession of the country since called Judea, which was at that time wholly desolate; that the Jews practised excision upon* their females; that Israel having ten sons divided his people over whom he reigned into so many kingdoms, and bestowed one upon each of them, the people being all called *Judæi* from Judas one of his sons, who died after the division; that Moses arrived with a number of those men, who were banished from Egypt for the leprosy by the advice of an oracle, at mount Sina, in the country of Damas-

† See Justin 36. 2. Strabo ubi supra, Diod. Sicul. edit. Rhodom. p. 901. Taciti Hist. 5. 2. &c.

* *Εκτομή*. Strabo, p. 761. and compare Note above page 283. but *εκτομία* was expressly forbid the Jews; See Levit. xxii. 24. 2. and Sept.

cus, after enduring hunger seven days in their passage through the deserts of Arabia; that he stole the *sacra* or gods of the Egyptians; that after Moses's death, his son Arvas, being priest to the Egyptian *sacra*, was immediately made king; that the Jews consecrated in their temple the effigy of an ass, in memory of a service which they received from a herd of such brutes, when they were in the utmost distress through thirst, in that journey, by shewing them springs of water; that Moses gave the priests greater shares in the division of the lands, that, receiving more ample revenues, they might give more assiduous and close attention to religious offices; and like things, which I believe none will now maintain to be realities? Withal, the accounts they give of the Jewish affairs; are contradictory and inconsistent with one another, of which instances † may be seen below.

† I cannot point them out all. Justin makes Moses sprung from Joseph, Israel's youngest son, who was a stranger in Egypt, but Strabo represents him to have been one of the Egyptian priests. Justin, Diodorus, and Tacitus, speak of the Jews as expelled from Egypt, because they laboured under the leprosy, which was indeed a very common charge, wherefore Josephus takes great pains to confute it, in his first book against Apion, sect. 25. &c. (and this by the bye is an additional argument no conclusion can be drawn to his scepticism and infidelity, from those modes of expression that have been made a handle for the charge, as was before observed, part 1. sect. 2. since about their being infected with the leprosy, and therefore driven out of Egypt, he also uses one of them, 'But about these things let every one think as he pleases.') But Strabo makes the departure of Moses, and of those who under his conduct removed from Egypt into the country where Jerusalem afterwards was built, to have been voluntary, and to have proceeded from his dissatisfaction with the Egyptian established rites, and his success in persuading not a few well-minded persons *εὐνομετασχεματισμοῦ*, that the Egyptians erred in likening the Divinity to beasts

Why then should any take up with Herodotus's story, that the Egyptians were the authors of circumcision to all other nations, and that the Syrians in Palestine, or the Jews themselves, confessed they had learned it from them, as some oracular assertion, who wrote when the Jews were less known to the Greeks,—or trust to these later writers Diodorus and Strabo as infallible here, who have been led into so egregious mistakes concerning them in other points?.

Further, I might observe that Herodotus's manner of expressing himself shews some uncertainty where the practice of circumcision first prevailed, since he says, whether the Ethiopians or Egyptians used it soonest he could not tell, though for the rea-

both wild and tame, and the Libyans and Greeks in representing gods under the similitude of men, for there was only one Deity called Heaven, which comprehended the earth, and sea, and all things. Justin makes the people who went out of Egypt under Moses, to have been originally from the country of Damascus, where Damascus, Azel, Adores, Abraham, and Israel, successively swayed the sceptre, though they afterwards settled in Egypt; but Strabo makes them descendants from the Egyptians themselves, as Tacitus tells us some were of this opinion, and said they poured out, on account of the immense numbers in Egypt, into the neighbouring lands, under the command of Judas and Hierosolymus. Justin says that from the time of Arvas, Moses's son, the royal and sacerdotal offices were among them united, Diodorus, Eclog. 40. that they never had a king, Strabo, p. 762. that Alexander, whose sons Hyrcanus and Aristobulus Pompey only subdued, was the first who made himself a king instead of a priest. And to add no more, whereas some affirmed, (as Plutarch we know has done,) that the Jews worshipped Bacchus, Tacitus denies this, and applies himself to refute it.—And shall we leave the Sacred Books, to follow persons who are at such variance and opposition with one another, in our ideas about the Jews?—

son he mentions, he inclined to think it was earliest received among the Egyptians; therefore, there is more room to suspect he might be deceived in some of his accounts about the place of its rise, and order of its propagation.—But, to pass this, it is easy for us to explain how Diodorus and Strabo were led to affirm the Jews learned circumcision from the Egyptians, for we discover in them an imagination that the Jews were a colony from Egypt, or a people of Egyptian extraction and pedigree, like the Colchians and others who migrated from that country. Now, upon this supposition, it was very natural for them to derive any similar custom which prevailed among them from the Egyptians, and to pretend that in it they followed their example, whom they looked on as their progenitors. But that notion being a mistake, since the Jews were not sprung from Egyptian ancestors, although they resided long in the land of Egypt, and went out thence to settle in Canaan, it is evident little deference can be due to the assertion of these writers, that they borrowed the practice of this ceremony from the people of Egypt, as it was only a native effect of their error about their original.

Again, though the Colchians, who are supposed to be the *Castuhim* of Moses, are said, by Herodotus, to have been circumcised from the beginning, being a * colony from Egypt, there arises a strong presumption against their practice of this rite at the time of their settlement, and, by consequence, against

* Lib. 2. 104. *Φασιονται μὲν γὰρ ὅτι οἱ Κόλχοι Αἰγυπτίαι.* Diodor. Sicul. *supra*, and Dionys. de Situ Orbis, and Euseb. agree with him in calling them a colony from Egypt.

its prevalence among the Egyptians, when these emigrants quit their native seat in their country from the following circumstance; that it appears, by a sacred historian still more antient than that Greek writer, that the Philistim, who again were the descendants of these † Casluhims, as they were of the Egyptians, were uncircumcised so late as Saul's reign, 1 Sam. xiv. 6. and xvii. 26. For is it not probable, if circumcision had been of so early use among the Colchians and Egyptians as is pretended, even from the period of their being each a nation, that those sons of the Casluhim, or Colchians, would have been as their fathers and progenitors when that prince swayed the scepter over Israel? Nor does it indeed seem more likely, that the Syrians seated on the banks of the rivers Thermodon and Parthenius, and their neighbours the Macrones, would have only learned that custom from the Colchians a little before Herodotus's age ‡, which yet, he says, they acknowledged to have been the case, had it obtained among them from the era of their fixing their residence on their border, and been brought with them out of Egypt as an established rite there, when they issued, as a hive from it, so soon, that the Philistim, who are reckoned to have sprung from them, are mentioned as a separate people in Isaac's days, Gen. xxvi.

But, lastly, to all these things, which discredit not a little the accounts by Herodotus and others, of the great antiquity of circumcision among the Egyptians, we can add, that we are able to oppose other Gentile writers to those who make circumcision to

† See Gen. x. 6, 13, 14. and Bochart. Phaleg. lib. 4. c. 31.

‡ Απο Κολχων φασιν νωστι μεμαθηκιναι. Ibid.

have been derived to the Jews from Egypt; and to Herodotus, who likewise represents the Ethiopians and Egyptians, or, rather, the Egyptians * alone, to have been the authors of it to all other nations. For Tacitus † plainly supposes the ceremony was peculiar to the Jews at its first institution among them; since he says, ‘ They appointed circumcision, that they might be known by the difference;’ which is also agreeable to the general assertions of others about

* As this is Herodotus’s sense in the passage before translated from lib. 2. p. 143. so it is expressly affirmed by him in a preceding page of the same book, ‘ Others leave their members as they were formed, except those who have learned to do otherwise from the Egyptians, for the Egyptians circumcise them.’ p. 117. edit. Stephan.

† Hist. lib. 5. c. 5. ‘ Circumcidere genitalia instituire, ut divinitate noscantur.’ Diodorus, as before intimated, says that Antiochus’s friends when they persuaded him to destroy the Jewish nation, represented that their laws were totally different, through a desire to perpetuate hatred against the rest of men; *Δια τὸ τοῦδε καὶ νομιμα παρτελῶς ἐξηλλαγμένα καταδειξαι*, &c. Eclog. 1. lib. 34. And he himself, in his account of the nation, and their laws, says Eclog. 1. lib. 40. that Moses appointed sacrifices and rules of living different from other nations, *Τὰς δὲ θυσίας ἐξηλλαγμένας συνέστησάτο τῶν παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐθνεσι, καὶ τὰς κατὰ τὸν βίον ἀγωγὰς*. Compare Strabo in the place above referred to, and Tacitus ubi supra. By these words of Tacitus, and the other passages quoted about the contrariety of the rites established among the Jews at their being formed into a body politic, to those which obtained among other nations, the reader may judge whether Dr. Middleton is well-founded in saying, ‘ Those who affirm circumcision to be of Hebrew original, and thence propagated to other nations, have no one author of antiquity to support their opinion, but such as take up with it on the credit of a tradition, derived from the Scriptural account of its antiquity,’ Letter to Dr. Waterland, p. 31. At the same time, we cannot reasonably wonder, that the Gentile writers were very sparing even to insinuate, that they had the honour and credit of being first in possession of a rite, which Egyptians and others afterwards practised.

the contrariety of their rites at their becoming a nation, to those of the rest of mankind. And Artapanus†, as quoted by Eusebius, in express terms affirms, ‘ That the Ethiopians borrowed it from the Jews through their veneration for Moses, instead of learning it, as Herodotus fancied, from the Egyptians; yea, that all priests every where derived it from the Jews.’ As Diodorus again informs us, that the Ethiopians supported their pretensions that the Egyptians were a colony from them by this, among other arguments, ‘ That their || customs and usages, in general, were copied from theirs; they who left their abode with them to settle in Egypt having retained their original and paternal rites.’ It seems then, on the whole §, very rash to contend upon the testimonies of persons so remote in time

† This Artapanus was a more ancient writer than Alexander Polyhistor, who flourished so far back as the 173d Olympiad, when Ptolemy Lathyr was reigning in Egypt, and Sylla was making war in Greece; for Polyhistor has quoted a passage from Artapanus, with relation to the patriarch Joseph, as may be seen Euseb. Praep. Evang. lib. 9. cap. 23. His words, as recited by the same Euseb. *ibid.* c. 27. on the subject before us, are, *‘Οὕτω δὲ τῆς Αἰθιοπίας——στερξαὶ τὸν Μωσὴν, ὥστε καὶ τὴν περιτομὴν τῶν αἰδοίων παρ’ αὐτοῦ μαθεῖν ἡ μόρον δὲ τῆς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἱερῆς ἀπαντας.*

|| Lib. 3. p. 175. Edit. Wesseling. *Τὰ δὲ πλεῖστα τῶν νομιμῶν τοῖς Αἰθιοπιοῖς ὑπάρχειν Αἰθιοπικά, τηρμένης τῆς παλαιᾶς συνήθειας παρὰ τοῖς ἀποικισθεῖσι.*

§ I have formed no argument against Herodotus’s assertion, ‘ That the Phenicians were taught circumcision by the Egyptians,’ from Sanchoniatho’s History of the Phenicians, where we are told Chronus was circumcised, apud Euseb. Prep. Evang. lib. 1. p. 38. partly because the whole work is of doubtful credit, and partly because it is very uncertain who Chronus was. Besides, if he were the Ham of Scripture, as many think, at the same time that it would shew the Phe-

from the first introduction of circumcision among Abraham's posterity, so mistaken in their relations of Jewish affairs, so repugnant in many things to one another, and so contradicted about this very point by other writers, that circumcision was practised by the Egyptians before Abraham's age. And it appears the more rash, because it is most reasonable to believe that, when God appointed it to this patriarch and his seed, to be a mark or token in their flesh, of his covenant with them to bestow upon them the land of Canaan, and to be their God, it was a rite of discrimination from the rest of mankind, instead of a rite common to those nations from whom they were intended by Providence to be kept separate through this covenant, lest they should be infected with their idolatry, and other vices. Agreeably, therefore, as we saw already, Josephus * scruples not to affirm, ' God commanded it ' to Abraham, desirous that his posterity might continue distinct, and not be blended with other people.' And Origen, when he finds fault with Celsus for saying, that the Jews learned circumcision from the Egyptians, exposes his folly thus, ' He rather † believed the Egyptians than Moses, who says, Abraham was circumcised first among men.' So diametrically opposite did he think it to the Scripture account of the institution of this rite, to suppose it of previous use any where before it was enjoined by

nicians did not learn it from the Egyptians, it would prove that one prior to Abraham practised it, which I do not suppose the truth.

* See part I. sect. 7. page 41.

† Origen adv. Cels. lib. 1. p. 17. — Μωσαι — λεγοντι πρωτον εν ανθρωποις περιτεμνισθαι τον Αβραμ.

God to Abraham. Some arguments, however, have been brought from the Sacred Books themselves, to convince us, that circumcision was in earlier use among the Egyptians. I will, therefore, next consider them.

Arguments from Scripture in favour of the superior antiquity of circumcision among the Egyptians, considered and refuted.

I. It is urged by some, in favour of the high antiquity of circumcision among the Egyptians, and its derivation from them to the Jews, that the Lord said unto Joshua on the day that the circumcision of all the people was finished, after their passage over the Jordan, and their entrance into Canaan, ‘ This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you, Joshua, v. 9.’ for, say these writers, this expression shews, uncircumcision must have been at that time a disgraceful and ignominious thing in the opinion of the Egyptians. But, I answer, though this were admitted to be the genuine sense of the expression, and therefore that the Egyptians were at that time circumcised, it would by no means prove that they were so, before Abraham was enjoined the use of this rite, which is the point contended for, since the command to practise it was given to him more than four hundred years sooner; and among his descendants, in conformity thereunto, its observation had been continued, till it was suspended during their pilgrimage in the desert, as is plain from their history in the book of Genesis, and from the

words of Joshua, in that very chapter formerly quoted. Accordingly, some have supposed, that it was introduced among them in Joseph's time, through his great influence and authority, or adopted *shortly after his death, from a conceit that the great increase† and prosperity of the Israelites was owing to it, in order to secure the same valuable blessings to themselves: for, as they were a superstitious people, it was very natural for them, say they, to infer, that its effects would be no less beneficial for promoting their own fertility and success, and from this motive to imitate that once despised people in it, however their pride and haughtiness might afterwards hinder their acknowledgment that it had its rise from them, lest this should reflect glory and reputation upon them. And those persons, who thus grant circumcision was practised by the Egyptians, antecedently to the passage of the Jordan, think the meaning of

* Diodorus, however, speaks of them as using very different religious rites, before their expulsion from the Egyptians, Eclog. 1. lib. 40. *Και διηλλασμένοις εθελον χρωμένων περι το ιερον και τας θυσιαις.*

† To this opinion the authors of the Ant. Univ. Hist. seem inclined; for, having mentioned Le Clerc's argument, 'Abraham's family, at his first coming into Egypt, was so inconsiderable, and his posterity afterwards so hated and despised by the Egyptians, that it is by no means probable that proud nation should have received such a ceremony from them,' They say, but might not this be the very motive that determined them in favour of it? was it not natural for the Egyptians, no less superstitious than haughty, to infer, that since it procured such great and valuable blessings to that despised people, it could not fail of proving more successful to them, if once they admitted it amongst them? Might not Joseph's time be a proper crisis to recommend it to them? &c. vol. 3. p. 258, 259. Note.

God's words to the Israelites, upon occasion of their circumcision after their entrance into Canaan, may be allowed to be, ' I have this day removed from ' you that part which the Egyptians do think ignominious and disgraceful,' without giving countenance to the imagination, that it obtained among them, before its appointment to Abraham.

But are we indeed sure, that we ought to conclude from these words of God, that circumcision took place among the Egyptians, ere Joshua led Israel into Canaan? we might indeed with certainty affirm this, if the words could bear no other explication, than that the Egyptians upbraided the Israelites with their uncircumcision, looking upon it as a thing full of shame. This, however, is by no means the case; for, though they * may receive that interpretation,

* I have allowed that the phrase *חֶרֶפַּת מִצְרַיִם* *Hherpath mitzraim*, may denote the reproach which the Egyptians cast upon others, for so, reproach of men, *Isaiah*, li. 7. reproach of heathen, *Nehem.* v. 9. reproach of people, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 5. stands for, reproach cast by the persons severally mentioned in these places upon others. Nevertheless, the reproach of any person spoken of, occurs far oftener in the other sense for reproach thrown upon that person; so the reproach of Job's youth, *xxix.* 4. is not the reproach which was in that stage of life cast by him upon others, but the reproach which was in that period deserved by him, so that it might have been thrown upon him by others. In like manner, it occurs, where we read, the reproach of God's servants, *Pf.* lxxxix. 50. the reproach of God's people, *Isaiah*, xxv. 8. *Micah*, vi. 16. the reproach of Israel's widowhood, *liv.* 4. the reproach of Israel's youth, *Jerem.* xxxi. 19. the reproach of the daughters of Syria, *Ezek.* xvi. 57. for reproach cast upon the subjects named. And the same way, it is generally taken with the possessive suffixes, my reproach, *Gen.* xxx. 23. 1 *Sam.* xxv. 39. *Job*, xix. 5. *Pf.* lxix. 19. cxix. 39. 2 *Sam.* xiii. 13. our reproach,

they may also signify the reverse or opposite; that uncircumcision was a circumstance with which they had upbraided the Egyptians, and for which they had contemned them as impure, esteeming it a blemish in them, in the same manner as they accounted it in the Philistines afterwards, and despised them by reason of it, 1 Sam. xiv. 6. and xvii. 26. Nay, it is agreeable to the more frequent and common use of the phrase 'the reproach of a person,' in Scripture, to expound it in this way rather than in the other. And there are likewise other considerations, which turn the scale much on this side. For although the Israelites might throw out censures against the Egyptians, while they dwelt among them, upon the score of their uncircumcision, it does not appear how the Egyptians could ever disparage them on that pretence. They could not do it while they sojourned in Goshen, for there circumcision was undergone by

Isaiah, iv. 1. Lament. v. 1. thy reproach, Pf. lxxiv. 22. Isai. xlvii. 3. his reproach, Prov. vi. 33. Hof. xii. 10. Dan. xi. 18. their reproach, Lam. iii. 61. Only, his reproach, is applied to signify, the reproach offered by the person described in the former clause of Dan. xi. 18. while in the latter, it is the reproach thrown upon the person introduced; and in Nehem. iv. 4. Pf. lxxix. 12. their reproach, is reproach cast by those spoken of, instead of reproach endured by them. It cannot then be questioned but it is suitable to the most general acceptation of the term *reproach* in such a construction, to understand the reproach of Egypt of the reproach thrown upon or undergone by the Egyptians. After this, surely it were superfluous to prove, that the Greek and Latin terms which express reproach, in a similar syntax, mean what may be or is imputed and objected to the persons spoken of, as a disgrace and foul stain, though it might be easily done, as Horat. Carm. lib. 4. ode 12. 'Opprobrium Cecropiae domus, &c.' And in the Septuagint translation, *Ονειδος* μν Gen. xxx. 23. &c.

the Jewish males, as hath been already seen : and as little could they do it during their residence in the desert, for here they saw their faces no more. It must therefore follow, that the reproach of Egypt, is the reproach which they cast upon the Egyptians when they dwelt in their land, instead of the reproach which the Egyptians cast upon them. Especially we must think so, if we judge it most probable, that circumcision, even when it did take place among the Egyptians, was never universally practised by them, but confined in its use to the priests and ministers of religion. And of this there is such * evidence,

* Philo de Circumcis. p. 810. having remarked, that circumcision was observed with zeal among other nations, especially the Egyptians, who were eminent both for numbers and wisdom, speaks as if circumcision was peculiar to their priests, instead of common to all. For he says, ‘ One reason of it is cleanliness of body, that it may be fit for the priesthood or priestly order *ταξει ιερωμενη*. Hence those who excel among the priests in Egypt, *προσυπερβαλλοντες οι εν Αιγυπτω ιερων*, shave their bodies, because there are gathered both by the hairs and the prepuce some things which ought to be taken away.’—In like manner, Josephus seems to represent circumcision as a rite appropriated to the priests among the Egyptians. The passage, as I translate it, runs thus, it being necessary to transcribe the whole, though somewhat long, ‘ The rest of the articles, in Apion’s accusation, it were reasonable to leave without any apology, that he may be an accuser of himself and other Egyptians, for he blames us, because we sacrifice living creatures, and do not eat swine’s flesh ; and he ridicules the circumcision of the parts which nature teaches to conceal ; as to killing of tame animals, it is indeed common to us with all other men, but Apion, in condemning them who sacrifice such, hath shewed himself to be an Egyptian by birth. For he would not have found fault, had he been a Greek or a Macedonian, since these men vow to offer hecatombs to the gods, and use sacrifices for feasts. Nevertheless, it hath not happened, that the world hath been made desolate of cattle,

as hath induced several learned and inquisitive persons to conclude it was always restrained to the sacerdotal order, who were to study greater purity and

‘ as Apion feared ; whereas indeed if all had followed the manners of
 ‘ the Egyptians, the world would have been laid waste of men, and
 ‘ been filled with the most fierce beasts, since these are by them accounted
 ‘ gods, and for this reason carefully nourished and preserved. But if
 ‘ any one should ask him, whom among all the Egyptians he esteemed
 ‘ the most wise and religious, he would readily own they were the
 ‘ priests, for they say they were enjoined these two things by their
 ‘ kings from the beginning, the worship of the gods, and the care of
 ‘ wisdom. Now, they all are both circumcised, and abstain from swine’s
 ‘ flesh, nor doth any other of the Egyptians sacrifice with them to the
 ‘ gods. Apion, therefore, was foolish, when he resolved to reproach
 ‘ us for the sake of the Egyptians, yet blamed them who not only use
 ‘ the customs which he reviles, but also taught others, according to
 ‘ Herodotus, to be circumcised. On which account, he seems to me
 ‘ to have suffered the becoming punishment of his blaspheming the laws
 ‘ (or rites) of his country, for he himself was brought under a necessity
 ‘ to be circumcised, an ulcer having been formed about the parts,
 ‘ and having received no benefit from circumcision, but mortified, he
 ‘ died in grievous pains.’ Contra Apion, lib. 2. c. 13. And upon it
 I observe, Josephus takes no notice of Apion’s having undergone that
 rite of circumcision, which he had reviled in the Jews, though it cannot
 be thought he would have omitted to do it, having so fair an opportunity,
 and to improve it against his reasoning, had he understood it to have been
 in universal use among the Egyptians ; he only turns against him the practice
 of the priests in his country, and a surgical operation wherein was some
 likeness to the rite, which he had been forced for the cure of some distemper
 to submit to.—Origen again, in his fifth homily on Jeremiah, as Huetius
 reads the text, after saying that many beside the Jews were circumcised,
 only subjoins, ‘ The idol priests among the Egyptians are circumcised,’
 without making it the custom of that whole people, *Τῶν Αἰγυπτίων εἰδωλοῖς οἱ ἱερεῖς
 περιτεμνοῦνται*. And in his second book on the epistle to the Romans,
 he represents, not that every Egyptian was circumcised, but that among
 the Egyptians who were counted the most antient, and the most learn-

perfection, notwithstanding the expressions of some writers are so general, as to lead every reader naturally to suppose circumcision was in common use and

ed in religious rites, so that from them almost all others derived their sacred ceremonies, none studied astronomy or geometry, none was a priest, a diviner, or a minister of any divinity, none even learned the sacerdotal letters of the antient Egyptians called Hieroglyphics, none was a hierophant or prophet as they called him, unless he was circumcised. Vide Origen. Opera, Edit. Huet. and Conf. Not. p. 5, 13.— In the same manner, Epiphanius Haeres 30. when he reproves Ebion for glorying in circumcision, does not say that the Egyptians in general suffer circumcision, as he does with relation to the Saracens, Samaritans, Idumeans, &c. but, 'The priests of the Egyptians undergo circumcision, *Οἱ ἱερεῖς τῶν Αἰγυπτίων περιτομῇ εἰσὶν*. Finally, Horapollon in his Hieroglyphics, lib. 1. cap. 15. when he is declaring the emblematical uses of the *gynocephalus*, does not ascribe to all the Egyptians, but to their priests alone, a zealous or careful observation of it. — *ἢ καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐπιτηδεύουσι περιτομῇ*. Such is the evidence, so far as I know it, for circumcision's being peculiar to the priests, or persons employed about sacred functions in Egypt, instead of being practised by the nation universally; and in consideration of it, many have been of opinion it was never in general use among the Egyptians. To this purpose in particular, speak the authors of the Antient Universal History, vol. 3. p. 258. Note. 'It is certain that neither they (the Egyptians,) nor any other nation we know of, the Jewish excepted, did practise circumcision universally. The priests were indeed obliged to be circumcised, but the rest of the people were left wholly at their liberty.' Even Dr. Middleton himself, is so impressed with the arguments for its being restrained to the priests, in his controversy with the present bishop of Rochester, though he maintain still, it was commonly performed by all the Egyptians, that he owns there may possibly have been some distinction between the priests and the people, in respect of its necessity, and the former may have been under some peculiar obligation to comply with the rite, together with all who desired admittance to their religious mysteries; wherefore it is recorded, that Pythagoras submitted to be circumcised, on account of the Egyptian prophets, that he might enter the *adyta*, and learn their recondite and secret phi-

observation among the nation. There is not then any sure ground to infer from that language, which God held to the Israelites upon their circumcision,

losophy. See his Defence of his Letter to Dr. Waterland, p. 89, 90. and compare Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. 1. p. 302.

It is true, Herodotus, who is a much older author than any of these writers already mentioned in this note, represents circumcision as a custom which prevailed among the Egyptians in general, far from giving any hint it was confined to the sacerdotal order, or men occupied in offices of religion, as they who have ability and inclination may further satisfy themselves, by looking into him, lib. 2. p. 117: and 143. Agatharcides also, who is placed under Ptolomy Philometor, as he is quoted by Photius in his Bibliotheca, p. 1358, makes circumcision a practice of all Egyptians promiscuously; for he says, it is the custom of the Troglodites (with exception of those whom he mentions,) to be circumcised, even as it is of all the Egyptians, *Τα δὲ αἰδοῖα τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις Τρωγλοδυταῖς ἐστὶν ἐπισημεῖον περιτεμνεσθαι, καθάπερ Αἰγυπτίους πάντας.*——And on account of their testimonies, it might be thought, that the Egyptians were generally circumcised in more ancient times, when their monarchy flourished, whatever restriction there may have been of its use in later ages, when their kingdom was dissolved, and the country converted into a Roman province, according to those other authors, as indeed some have attempted, by such an hypothesis, to explain and reconcile the opposite accounts. But when we consider, that Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, who wrote about the age of Augustus, use as general expressions about the Egyptian practice, as those earlier writers, though there seems to be a superior weight of testimony, that the rite was then confined to the priests, and when we remember, that there is no intimation to be met with of any change and revolution in their custom, through the interval between the different periods wherein Herodotus or Agatharcides wrote, and that wherein these witnesses for the limited observation of it lived, there is room to suspect that there must have been some misapprehension about the extent of the rite by those men, and that they have been by some means or other led to conceive it greater than it in truth was. If the reader shall also think this most probable, he will be hereby confirmed in the interpretation I have given of God's words in Joshua, v. 9. for the Egyptians

after they crossed the Jordan, 'This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you,' that circumcision was in that age practised by the Egyptians; for from what hath been said, it is more natural to interpret God's meaning to be, that he had taken away that, for which the Israelites* had abhorred the Egyptians, than that for which the Egyptians had slighted and decried them, as much as † Mr. Vol-

would never upbraid the Israelites with their uncircumcision, when such was the state of all among themselves, except their priests.

* To take away a reproach from one, is, to leave no longer occasion or pretence for casting a slur upon a person, as may be seen by comparing Genesis, xxx. 23. Isaiah, iv. 1. and Ps. cxix. 22.

† Thus he paraphrases the words in Joshua, 'I have delivered you from what was a reproach to you among the Egyptians,' and then proceeds, 'Now what else could this reproach be to people hemmed in between the Phenicians, Arabians, and Egyptians, but that for which these three nations despised them? how is this reproach removed? by taking away a little of the foreskin. Is not this the natural import of that passage?' Philosoph. Diction p. 129. Article, Circumcision. But how justly the reader may determine, after perusing with attention what is above offered.— I am aware some have explained God's expressions, on which Mr. Voltaire and others build so much, to have no reference to uncircumcision at all, and by consequence have destroyed all inference from them, in favour of the then practice of circumcision among the Egyptians. But they differ much in fixing their sense. Thus Dr. Delany, in his *Revelation examined with Candour*, makes the meaning, that God, by imprinting that mark in their flesh which distinguished them from the people of Egypt, had taken away all handle for branding them with the character of vagabond and fugitive Egyptians, vol. 2. p. 121. Schmidius understands it, of God's removing their reproach against himself about Egypt, that it would have been better he had allowed them to tarry there, and not brought them into the deserts, forasmuch as he now granted them an happy issue from all their coils and difficulties, by introducing them into a rich and fruitful land, See Num. xiv. 3, 4. Others again say, the declaration signifies, God's taking a

taire triumphs in this sense, as if it were the only genuine one. And if these words of God will not prove that circumcision prevailed among the Egyptians in Moses's age, far less can they furnish any shadow of argument for asserting, that they were circumcised in Abraham's time, who sojourned in their country several hundred years sooner.

II. It is argued further, that the Egyptians must have been circumcised earlier than the Jews, because they are mentioned by God before the Jews, when he threatens to punish the circumcised and the uncircumcised nations together, Jer. ix. 25, 26. 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will
'punish all them who are circumcised with the un-
'circumcised; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and
'the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that
'are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wil-
'derness.' But there seems to be little strength in this reasoning. For, should it be granted, that God in this enumeration, recited first the circumcised, and then the uncircumcised nations, upon whom he was about to execute vengeance, it would by no means follow, from the preference of Egypt to Judah in the catalogue, that the Egyptians were in pos-
way the reproach which the Egyptians cast on them, as if they had departed, relying on vain promises of a settlement in Canaan, which would never be accomplished, from Numb. xiv. 13—16. and Exod. xxxii. 12. And there may be authors, who propose a fourth or fifth interpretation. Besides, to expound it of uncircumcision, appears the most easy and obvious sense, from the occasion and context. I do not therefore embrace any of them. Nor is there, if I am not deceived, any need to prefer any of those more violent and strained comments, that so we may wrest it from their abuse, who thence argue circumcision obtained before among the Egyptians.

session of the rite of circumcision ere it was enjoined to the Jews. For they might be named first for a very different reason than the more antient possession of it; even because they excelled in power and wealth among the people who observed that ceremony, and, accordingly, were the frequent trust and confidence of the Jews in seasons of danger and distress, see *Isai. chap. xxx. and xxxi. Ezek. xxix. 6, 7, &c.*—Is there, however, any ground to believe, that God intended here to mention first circumcised, and then uncircumcised nations, who would be the subjects of his wrath? It rather seems, that he numbers nations promiscuously, since he adds, at the end of his detail, this reflection, ‘For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.’ For hence we are naturally led to conclude, that the nations he had spoken of beside the Jews, the Egyptians whom he had introduced before them, and the Ammonites and Moabites whom he had brought in after them, were uncircumcised in a different sense from the Jews, in their flesh namely, and not merely in their heart. Agreeably, the Egyptians, under the appellation of Pharaoh and all his multitude, are elsewhere, in the writings of this prophet, described as uncircumcised, *Ezek. xxxi. 18.* ‘Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that are slain by the sword:’ for, ‘to lie in the midst of the uncircumcised,’ is the phrase used by him concerning the destruction of the Edomites, *xxxii. 29.* who were, in his age, strangers to the rite, since Josephus tells us, they only submitted to it on Hyrcanus’s conquest of their country, which happened long af-

ter†. ‘Hyrcanus, says he, having subdued the Idumeans, granted them permission to continue in their territory; if they would consent to be circumcised, and conform to other Jewish laws; they, thro’ their affection to their native country, submitted to undergo circumcision, and to live in other respects as Jews, and from this period they were Jews.’ The passage then in Jeremiah, upon which the plea for the superior antiquity of circumcision among the Egyptians is built, instead of establishing that point, rather confirms our opinion that circumcision was of earlier use among the Jews than among them, if it was ever at all a national rite with them. Nay, may be improved to increase the suspicion that Herodotus, and others after him, were mistaken * in relating it as such.

III. Once more, it is insisted on as a strong presumption, that circumcision was earlier known in Egypt, that it was not enjoined by God to Abraham till he had resided in that country. To this purpose, Mr. Voltaire, having observed that Abraham had been circumcised before the Jews spoken of in the book of Joshua, (though, as was remarked, he made his circumcision terminate in himself, and not pass

† Antiq. 13. 9. 1.

* If Suidas be appealed to in behalf of its general use among the Egyptians, because he, under the word $\psi\omega\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ in his Lexicon, hath these words, ‘Οἱ δὲ Αἰγυπτιοὶ $\psi\omega\lambda\omicron\iota$ λεγονται εἶναι, τὸτ’ οὖν περιτεμνόμενοι. It is easy to answer, he may describe their state in his own age, through their obedience to Mahomet. As heathens, it had ceased to be universal among them long before his time, according to Mr. Voltaire himself, who rightly observes, Phil. Diction. page 131. ‘The Latin Authors gave the Jews the epithets of *Curti*, *Apellæ*, &c. and not the Egyptians.’ So Horace, Catullus, Martial, Juvenal, thereby denoting, they alone in their days were circumcised in a national capacity.

to his posterity till Joshua's time) proceeds and says, † ' Abraham, having travelled into Egypt, which ' had, for a long time, been a flourishing monarchy, ' governed by a powerful king, circumcision may ' not improbably be supposed to have obtained in a ' kingdom of such antiquity, before the Jewish nation ' was founded.' And the author of the Characteristicks had led the way to him here, for he expresseth himself thus, † ' Abraham had been a guest and inhabitant of Egypt, (where historians mention this to ' have been a national rite) long ere he had received ' any divine notice or revelation concerning this affair.'

But, besides that there is reason to look upon all as arrant fiction, which we are told about Egypt's being the seat of a powerful monarch for many ages before Abraham, and that there is some appearance, circumcision, when it obtained there, was only a sacerdotal rite, instead of a national one, upon which supposition, the use of it would be less catching to strangers that were not of priestly rank, it cannot at all be justly concluded, from God's not instituting circumcision till after Abraham had been in Egypt, that he had seen it there, and on seeing it, contracted, as is pretended, a fondness for it; for why then should its injunction have been delayed for twenty years after his return from sojourning there, and not have been commanded while he stayed in the country, or soon after he came back? The natural account of its appointment at that season plainly is, not that he was then disposed to practise it

† Phil. Dict. ubi supra, page 129, 130.

‡ Shaftesbury's Characteristicks vol. 3. page 52, 53.

in imitation of the Egyptians, (for condescension in God to such a weakness would have operated the injunction of it sooner, as the bias and propensity to it must have been stronger, the shorter the interval from his communication and intercourse with the Egyptians) but that then God revealed his intention of bestowing on his posterity, by a son whom Sarah should bear to him, the land of Canaan. Upon this account, he at that time, and not before, appointed circumcision to be a token of his covenant with him, Gen. xvii. 5—14. There is then no cause to think circumcision was ordered to Abraham from a regard to some prepossession he had imbibed in its favour during his abode in Egypt.---This hypothesis of our author, however, is also liable to other difficulties besides such as arise from considering the distance of time between Abraham's residence there, and God's institution of the rite to him and his family. For Mr. Voltaire roundly asserts, 'That the Egyptians at first circumcised both male and female children, though he makes them, in process of time, to have discontinued this operation on * the females, and at length to have limited it to priests, astrologers, and prophets.' I may therefore ask him if God gave the command to Abraham because he was inclined to tread in the steps of the Egyptians, why did he not order the ceremony to be performed upon his female, as well as upon his male issue, and upon his domestics of the one sex, as well as the

* Philos. Dict. page 131. Yet Strabo, who wrote in the age of Augustus, speaks of it as the manner of the Egyptians in his time, as was observed above. And Ambrose, Bp of Milan, whose words are produced in a following note, speaks of it as their practice almost 400 years after.

other? As God did not injoin it so extensively in regard of its subjects to Abraham, as, according to our author, it was practised in Egypt, here certainly is a difficulty which presses his scheme, though it may not embarrass that of others, who, while they attribute the original of circumcision to the Egyptians, do not suppose any but males were subjected to it, because Herodotus, Agatharcides, and others, omit all particular mention that others underwent it, and use only a general expression *. To this also I may add, how will he explain, upon his principles, the variation in the time of performing the rite, that whereas the Egyptians circumcised their children in the thirteenth or fourteenth year of their age, Abraham was directed to circumcise his, Gen. xvii. (as the Jews in like manner were commanded afterwards, Levit. xii. 3.) on the eighth day from their birth, under the pain of their being cut off from the land of the living? For if this difference, as to the time of their practising the rite from that fixed by God's ordinance to Abraham, which some † have affirmed, be admitted by him, it must still more straiten him, who makes God to have prescribed circumcision to Abraham and his seed, in indulgence to their propensity to imitate Egyptian manners. Neverthe-

* Thus Herodotus, page 117. Αἱ Ἰουδαῖοι περιτομίζονται.—Τὰ τε αἰδοῖα περιτομίζονται, &c.

† Thus Ambrose, who flourished about A. D. 382. is positive that the fourteenth year of childrens age was the time of the operation.

* De Abrahamo, lib. 2. sect 11. Aegyptii anno decimo quarto circumcidunt mares, et foeminae apud eos eodem anno circumcidi feruntur, quod ab eo viz anno passio virilis flagrare incipiat, et feminarum menstrua sumant exordia.

less, though more antient writers may seem to express† themselves in such a manner as to lead us to think that the Egyptians, as well as Jews, did perform it soon after the birth, he, if I do not misapprehend him, adopts that opposite notion, that they did it at the distance of thirteen or fourteen years from it. For he says, ‘The Jews imitated the circumcision of the Egyptians and Arabs;’ as if these two nations had observed the same time for it, when yet the Arabs, as we will learn from Josephus presently, did not perform it till about that more mature season of life. There is then no foundation in Scripture for† saying, that circumcision prevailed among the

† I intend Strabo, who, speaking of the Egyptians, says, lib. 17. p. 824. (Aimel. edit. 1180.) *Και τὸ τοῦ ζήλωνος μαλιστα παρ’ αὐτοῖς, τὰ πάντα τρέφειν τὰ βενώμενα παῖδια, καὶ τὸ περιτέμνειν, καὶ τὰ θηλεῖα ἐκτέμνειν, &c* Diodor. Sicul. edit. Wesseling. lib. 1. p. 33. (Rhodom. 24.) after mentioning that the nation of the Colchians in Pontus, and the nation of the Jews between Arabia and Syria had gone out of Egypt to seek habitations, adds, *Διο καὶ περὰ τοῖς γένεσι τούτοις, &c.* as in page 283. Also, lib. 3. page 198. (Rhod. 115.) he says, ‘All the Troglodites are circumcised in the same manner, *Παραπλησιως*, as the Egyptians, except those of them who are called *Κολυβοί*, for they alone of all who dwell within those straits, have all the part, which in others is circumcised, cut off with razors in childhood, *ἐκ νηπιῶν*. To the same purpose, Photius hath preserved a passage of Agatharcides, in his Bibl. p. 1358. for he gives the same account of the Troglodites in general. as was seen before, and then says. the *Κολυβοί*, as the Greeks called them, were treated in that manner when they were children, *νηπιῶν ὥστε*.

† Dr. Delany argues from Genesis, xvii. 3. where it is said, ‘Abraham circumcised all in his house that were bought with his money,’ that circumcision did not prevail in Egypt then, because if it had, some of them would have been circumcised before, even such as he had acquired in Egypt, Gen. xii. 16. also from Exod. ii. 6. that circum-

Egyptians, ere it was instituted to Abraham and his posterity. Let us next see, whether any countenance is given to such an opinion by Josephus and Philo, who have been also quoted to serve the cause.

The vanity of those pleas which are taken from Philo and Josephus to support the claim of the Egyptians, exposed.

IT hath been further remarked by the advocates for the superior antiquity of circumcision among the Egyptians, that Philo would never have omitted asserting it belonged originally to the Jews, in * his treatise on the subject, unless he had been conscious the Egyptians, whose practice he mentions for the vindication of his countrymen, had been examples to them in it. But surely Philo's silence upon this head can have no force to persuade any impartial person, that the Egyptians were first in possession of it, as indeed arguments taken from the silence of authors, in general, are of a more dubious and uncertain nature, wherever the same might proceed from a variety of causes. Philo, though convinced his own nation used the rite earlier than any other, may very reasonably be supposed to have avoided taking any notice of it, lest it should give offence to the Egyptians, among whom he lived, they being beyond

cision was unknown to the Egyptians at the time of Moses's nativity, for how unless circumcision had been peculiar to the Israelites, should Pharaoh's daughter have immediately concluded on seeing the child in the coffer, and the sex thereof, ' This is one of the Hebrew children.' The force of which observations the reader may consider.

* See Philo de Circumcis. ubi supra.

measure jealous of their honour, about the originality of their customs civil and religious, and to have satisfied himself upon this principle, with giving such an explication of the reasons which were assigned for the rite, and the uses to which it was thought subservient, as tended to justify it both in Jews and Egyptians.—It may even seem, on the other hand, had it been his judgment the Egyptians led the way herein, he would not have failed to observe it, since it would have been much to his purpose of defending circumcision, to have said, not only that the Egyptians, who excelled in numbers and wisdom, were circumcised as well as the Jews, but that they, who were so famous and renowned a people, set a pattern of it to them and the rest of mankind.

With the same view likewise of shewing, that circumcision obtained sooner among the Egyptians than among Abraham's posterity, it hath been observed, that Josephus does not confute Herodotus's assertion, 'That the Syrians in Palestine acknowledged they learned it from the Egyptians,' when he quotes † the same. But the weakness of this argument from his

† Says Dr. Middleton, Letter to Dr. Waterland, page 28. 'Josephus, who in his Defence of the Jews against Apion, takes occasion more than once to mention this testimony of Herodotus, instead of censuring or attempting to confute it, argues from it as from a thing granted;' And then quotes his words against Apion, lib. 2. c. 13. which have been already translated in a former note on this section, making Josephus say, 'The Egyptians are all circumcised,' where he only speaks of their priests. But though Josephus takes it for granted, that the Syrians in Palestine spoken of by Herodotus were Jews, there is no colour for saying, he takes for granted the truth of the fact which Herodotus makes them own, that they had learned circumcision from the Egyptians,

work against Apion, hath, if I am not mistaken, been already * discovered. Only it may be proper to add, it is the more unreasonable to draw such an inference as is here done, (I mean, that Josephus approved Herodotus's account of its being derived to his nation from the Egyptians, from his omitting to censure him, in patriotic zeal for their credit,) because Josephus himself labours elsewhere to impress men with a belief that all the rites and ceremonies of the Gentiles, which bore any similitude or likeness to the usages of the Jewish people his countrymen, were borrowed from them. For, says † he, ‘ Of old many have
 ‘ had a great forwardness to imitate our religious rites;
 ‘ there is no city of the Greeks or Barbarians, no nation where a regard to the seventh day, on which
 ‘ we rest from labour, hath not reached; and where
 ‘ fastings, and burning of lamps, and abstinences
 ‘ from many kinds of food, are not observed, &c.’ Besides, is Josephus silent, when he recites Herodotus's words which make the Egyptians authors of circumcision to them, as to the rest of mankind? So is Origen in one place, when he mentions Celsus's reproach ‡, that the Colchians and Egyptians were taught circumcision by the Jews; but did Origen therefore esteem Celsus's reflection just? We are sure he did not; for in another § passage, as we have seen, he shews his conviction, that Abraham was circumcised first among men. As therefore Origen's assent to the story of the Egyptians in Herodotus, when it comes

* See part I. sect. last, p. 40.

† Contra Ap. lib. 2. c. 39.

‡ Ubi supra, Origen adv. Cels. 5. 259.

§ Ibid. 1. 17.

from Celsus's pen, cannot be gathered with truth from his forbearing to contradict it, at his introduction of it, no more is Josephus's acquiescence in the justice of his tale, to be collected merely from his neglecting to deny and oppose the same, where he brings it in; and the less, because it did not fall in with his view then, as was said, to call him to account § for it: not to repeat what was also before observed, that he hath sufficiently discovered his sense elsewhere, that at God's institution of the rite to Abraham and his posterity, its use was peculiar to them.*

§ See part 1. sect. last, p. 40.

* I am aware, Dr. Middleton urges also Josephus's words, Antiq. 8. 10. 3. where after quoting Herodotus's account about the confession of the Syrians in Palestine, and remarking, 'It is manifest none others of the Syrians in Palestine are circumcised, but ourselves alone;' he adds, 'About these things however let every one speak as he pleases.' For would Josephus have expressed himself in this manner, if he had not looked upon circumcision as of previous use among the Egyptians? But I answer, these words must relate chiefly at least, if not solely, to the story of Shisak's plundering the city and temple of Jerusalem, and to the question, whether Herodotus referred to that transaction or not; for Josephus having related the history contained in 2 Chron. xii. and 1 Kings, xiv. adds, 'Herodotus the Hali-carnassian hath mentioned this expedition, only committing a mistake about the name of the king, (he intends, it hath been thought, he calls him Sesostris, lib. 2. p. 145.) for he tells us, that he invaded many other nations, and reduced to servitude Palestine in Syria, having taken its men without fighting a stroke. Now it is plain he meant to declare, that our nation was subdued by the Egyptian, since he says, he left pillars in their country, who surrendered to him without any battle, with a figure engraven on them which was expressive of their effeminacy, ἀδολία γυναικῶν ἐγγράψας; and Rehoboam our king yielded the city to him without lifting an arm.' Then he goes

Upon the whole then, I apprehend, I may conclude without incurring any blame either for want of understanding, or candour, or moderation, that Mr. Voltaire and others have had no sufficient reason for affirming, that the rite of circumcision was introduced among the Jews in imitation of the practice of

on, ' He also says, that the Ethiopians learned circumcision from the Egyptians, for the Phenicians and Syrians in Palestine own they learned it from them,' and concludes as above in the beginning of this note. Now hereby every one must perceive, what Josephus writes about the testimony of Herodotus to the circumcision of the Jews, is only brought in to shew, that this historian, by the country of Palestine in Syria which Sesostris conquered so easily, understood their country; and therefore, that the indulgence which he gives to every person to speak about these things according to his sentiments, must refer chiefly, if not only, to the subject which gave rise to that episode, if I may so call it, for the confirmation of his opinion, that Herodotus described the same expedition of the king of Egypt against Jerusalem, which was described in their sacred books. Dr. Middleton indeed contends, that his allowance of this freedom of speech, regards what he had said about circumcision, not only in part, which may be granted, because the mention of circumcision immediately precedes the words which contain it, but principally, if not solely; and he gives this reason for saying it must be thought to do so, ' That though Josephus uses the same reflection very often, he never applies it but to some fact or point of great moment to the truth or essential character of the Jewish religion. Therefore, as the story of Shifak is of no consequence to the Jewish nation or religion, it is rational to think the reflection here is to be applied (he should have said, especially,) to the case of circumcision, which is of consequence thereunto.' See Middleton's Remarks on a Reply to the Defence of his Letter to Dr. Waterland, Works, vol. 3. p. 187. But whoever takes the trouble of examining all the places where Josephus uses that mode of expression, will be sensible that he does not always confine his use of it to matters so important. Here in particular, of whatever moment it was to a Jew to be circumcised, it was a thing which no way affected the truth or essential character of the Jewish religion, whether Herodotus took notice that the Jews practised the ce-

the Egyptians. I have examined, so far as I know, all their authorities for it, and they appear to me by no means any good foundation for the superstructure they raise thereon, which I hope will be now also the judgment of the reader.

Mr. Voltaire's assertion, that the Jews imitated the circumcision of the Arabs examined, and some reflections upon the manner and time of the Egyptians beginning the use of circumcision, which conclude this article.

As to Mr. Voltaire's saying, in the same sentence which was already produced, that the Jews imitated the circumcision of the Arabs, it is a position which cannot detain us long; for I do not know any anti-ent writer who affords any handle for pretending they took it from them. Indeed, I know no author of this class at all, who mentions the prevalence of circumcision among the Arabs by name, except Josephus, who, in a passage * before quoted, tells us, 'That being Ishmael's descendants, they circumcise their children in the thirteenth year.' But it is

remony, which is all Josephus aimed to establish. At any rate, whether these words relate to circumcision chiefly or not, they cannot authorize us to conclude, that Josephus thought the Jews derived circumcision from Egypt, or that his countrymen owned it, after what hath been observed on the import of such phrases, part 1. sect. 2. p. 9, 10. &c.

* See part 1. sect. last, p. 41. Antiq. 1. 12. 2. Ἀραβὶς δὲ μετὰ εἰκοτρεκαίδεκατον (ἔθος ἔχουσι) ποιῆσαι τὰς περιτομὰς· Ἰσμαηλὸς γὰρ ὁ κτίστης τοῦ ἔθνους, Ἀβραμῷ γενομένος ἐκ τῆς παλλακῆς, ἐν τῷ περὶ τεμνέται τῷ χρόνῳ· περὶ ὃ τοῖς πάντα λόγον ἐκθῆσομαι μετὰ πολλῆς ἀκριβείας. This treatise of Josephus, however, concerning circumcision, if ever he wrote it, is lost, so that no light can be derived from it.

plain he furnishes no pretence to affirm, it was observed by them antecedently to its appointment unto Abraham: for he makes their being sprung from Ishmael, who was his son by Hagar, and circumcised in the thirteenth year of his age, because he was so old at the time God enjoined his father this rite, the ground of their circumcising their children at the same time of life, though Mr. Voltaire† will have them also to have learned the ceremony from the Egyptians. It is true, the Arabians sometimes come under the name of Ethiopians with the antients, as Arabia is sometimes called Ethiopia by them. Even the Jewish historian himself, is supposed to use this stile sometimes: for he speaks of a war‡ with the Ethiopians, in which Moses commanded the Egyptian forces against them, and besieged Saba a capital city of Ethiopia. Now here the word, it is said, must have that meaning, Saba being† metropolis of Arabia. And upon this hypothesis, that the Arabs are called Ethiopians by the antients, there are many authorities for their having observed circumcision, as must have been remarked by every attentive reader of this section, and among others, the passage concerning the Troglodites, since they were a people of

† Phil. Diction. p. 130. 'Where is the improbability of the Hebrews having imitated the Egyptians in circumcision? It was no more than their neighbours the Arabs had done.'

‡ Antiq. 2. 10. 2.

† So Diodorus Siculus, who in his second book appropriates the name of Arabia to the country between Syria and Egypt, makes Saba, or, as others read, Saba, the metropolis of the Arabians, lib. 3. sect. 47 Edit. Rhodom. p. 126. Weßeling. 215. Τῆ δὲ πόλις τὴν μητροπολὶς ἐστὶν ἢ καλεῖται Σάβας ἐκ τῆς ὀνόματι.

eastern Ethiopia, or Ethiopia on the Arabic gulf. But still there is no shadow of testimony, that the Jews borrowed circumcision from them, unless the meaning of our author be, that they learned it from the Egyptians, who had themselves been taught it by them, as indeed the Ethiopians must be supposed to have given out. And in this sense, it coincides with the assertion of their taking it from the Egyptians, which hath been already considered, and shewed to be ill-grounded; there being no proof it was known to them sooner than to Abraham and his posterity.

We may then rest satisfied, that circumcision was commanded to Abraham and his posterity, and in pursuance of the divine injunction practised by them, ere it was in use among the Egyptians and other nations; as indeed I believe this opinion will of its own accord arise in the mind of every unbiassed and unprejudiced person, who reads the relation of its appointment by God, and observance by them, which we have in the book of Genesis, instead of the conceit, that it was then common to others with them.

Should any now enquire, whence or when the Egyptians began to observe circumcision, as a national, or at least as a sacerdotal rite, since they were not in possession of it before the Abrahamic family? I reply, it is difficult to say. About this point, learned men have gone into very different sentiments, there being such a defectiveness of evidence for one account of its entrance among them beyond another. For some have ascribed it to the influence of Abraham himself; some to the credit and authority of Joseph, while in reward of his eminent service he had supreme rule over Egypt next to the king, together

with the example* of his father and brethren, who settled there during his administration of public affairs; some to the observation of the prodigious fruit-

* To this opinion it hath been objected, that 'It was an abomination to the Egyptians to eat bread with the Hebrews,' Gen. xliiii. 22. and that 'all shepherds (such as they were) were an abomination to the Egyptians,' Gen. xli. 34. How then can it be thought the Egyptians would copy the rite of circumcision from them in that age? But it may be answered, so were the Greeks an abomination to the Egyptians: for neither would they salute a Greek, nor use the knife, or spit, or kettle of a Greek, lest they should be defiled by his embrace, after he had been partaker of food which they counted unlawful, of which sort were cows, and with many of them sheep, or by the touch of these utensils, after they had been employed about the same prohibited vic-tuals. See Herodotus, 2. cap. 41, 42. and Diod. Sicul. (Rhodom. 77.) Wesseling. 97. But will it follow therefore that the Egyptians never borrowed any custom from the Greeks?—Strabo gives the Jews a good character at their departure from Egypt, and settlement in Palestine, which, though it relate to them in a later period than Joseph's government, I shall give at once here, for he says, 'That Moses, one of the Egyptian priests, possessing a certain district of the country, departed thence, having disliked the appointed rites, and many who honoured the Deity went out with him, πολλοὶ τιμῶντες τὸ θεοὶ αὐτῷ συνε-
'ησαν, for he taught them, &c.' as above quoted, p. 288. 'And persuaded not a few well-minded persons to accompany him; that he founded no contemptible kingdom in the country where Jerusalem now stands, all around having eagerly joined him, as he promised to establish such a worship, and such a priesthood, as would not be uneasy by ex-pences or θεωρημάτων, processions with images of the gods, or other ab-surd practices, and assured that those who lived soberly and righte-ously ought to expect always some gift from God, but they of an opposite character ought to look for no benefit.—That they who succeeded, continued some ages in the same sentiments, doing justly and being truly pious, till first superstitious men, and afterwards ty-rannical men intruded into the priesthood, when from superstition proceeded abstinences from meats, which the nation uses still, and circumcisions, and excisions, and such customs; and from oppressions,

fulness and increase of the Israelites who used it, and the undeniable discoveries of divine favour toward them, at their removal thence; and some to the friendship † that was established between the Jewish nation

‘ robberies: for they who revolted, harassed both that country and
 ‘ the neighbourhood, but they who took part with the rulers, plundered what belonged to others, and subdued a good part of Syria and
 ‘ Phœnicia. *Οἱ δὲ διαδξαμῶναι χρόνῳ μὲν τινὰς ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς διε-
 ‘ μῆνοι δικαιοπραγῶντες καὶ θεοσεβῆς ὡς ἀληθῶς οὐτες, &c.*’ Thus Strabo, lib. 16. p. 761. edit. Almél. 1104. and what an honourable account is it of the Jews, in the beginning of their state! Justin too speaks well of them; for having said, ‘ That after Arvas, Moses’s son, was made king, the Jews had the same persons for priests and kings,’ he adds, ‘ The justice of these priests and kings mixed with piety, acquired them an incredible power, *Quorum iustitia religione permixta, incredibile quantum convaluere.*’ 36. 2. Were these Jews then such in earlier times, as to be thought unworthy of imitation in any of their customs?—Besides do not we ourselves know a nation, which is ready to imitate the fashions of another nation, though to this nation, there is, on many accounts, a strong aversion and antipathy.

† It is easy on this supposition to answer Dr. Middleton’s query, with whatever air of triumph he has proposed it; Letter to Dr. Waterland, *ibid.* pp. 30, 31. ‘ Which then is the more probable, that
 ‘ a people great and powerful, famed every where abroad, and valuing themselves highly at home for their wisdom and learning, should
 ‘ borrow so remarkable a custom from a nation they always hated and despised, or that the lawgiver of a petty infant state, should copy
 ‘ that as well as many others of his constitutions, from the practice of
 ‘ a great and flourishing kingdom?’ for the Jews were not so abhorred and contemned by them in those days, as appears from the intercourse between the two kingdoms, mentioned in Scripture, 1 Kings, iii. 1. and x. 28, 29. 2 Kings, xvii. 4. xviii. 21. 24. Isaiah, xxx. xxxi. Ezek. xxix. 6, 7. Nor will Dr. Middleton’s quotation from Josephus contra Apion, 1. 13. prove they were always hated and slighted by them against such proofs of the contrary; for Josephus never intended his words, which run thus, ‘ All the Egyptians in common were especi-

and the Egyptian, upon Solomon's marriage unto Pharaoh's daughter, and cultivated to a considerable degree under the reign of different princes in both countries at intervals, by traffic and commerce, by leagues or treaties, and by assistance against enemies. But they all suppose, that, after learning in one or other of these channels to circumcise their children within a short time of the birth, they altered the season of it in process of ages to the thirteenth or fourteenth year of life, (if indeed this was ever the period for it with them,) the more effectually to hide their having borrowed the custom from the Hebrews, who were a nation much detested in later times, for impiety toward the gods and unsociable manners, or to serve some different purpose. Others again, instead of supposing they took circumcision from Abraham's descendants by Isaac, who circumcised their children on the eighth day, have been of opinion they learned it from his posterity by Ishmael, among whom Josephus menti-

* ally ill-affected toward us. *Μαλιστα προς ημας δυσμενως διατεθεντες κοινημιν παντες Αιθιοπιοι.* should be understood with such rigor, as to imply, that this was their temper through all ages. They are introduced by him only to shew, that it would be unreasonable to arraign the Egyptian writers of falsehood, whom he was about to bring as vouchers for the antiquity of his nation.—He uses the same expressions there concerning the Tyrians among the Phenicians, when he would secure credit to their evidence in behalf of the same point; yet surely the Tyrians were not unfriendly to the Jews in the times of David and Solomon, 1 Kings, v. 1, 11. He himself hath recorded proof of the respect of both people toward the Jews in that period. Ant. 8. 2. 6. and ibid. 6. 4. 5. and Contra Apion. 1. 17. 18.

† Of this opinion is Bochart in his Phaleg. lib. 4. cap 31. p. 325. and Huetius, if I mistake not, in his annotations on Origen's works ubi supra.

on the Arabians as practising it in the thirteenth year of life, after the example of their father Ishmael. To this purpose they may observe, that the Ethiopians, according to Herodotus, used that ceremony so far back, that it was hard to tell whether they or the Egyptians were first in possession of it, though he inclined to believe the Egyptians had the precedence, as we saw above.—They may urge also the assertion of the Ethiopians, with all the reasons in support of it related by Diodorus, that the Egyptians learned their laws and customs from them, together with Arabose's account likewise already mentioned, that the Egyptians subjected their children to it in their fourteenth year. And, finally, they may remark, that those Ethiopians were called Arabs by the * antients sometimes, or, however if they were distinct from them, lived just on their border, as they were also neighbours to the Egyptians. Easily therefore, say they, might the custom be com-

* Artapanus, in a passage preserved by Eusebius in his *Præp. Evang.* 9. 27. says, 'Moses fled from Egypt into Arabia, *ες Αραβίαν*, and lived with Raguel the ruler of the country, and married his daughter.' Josephus, giving an account of the same fact, *Antiq.* 2. 17. 1. 2. after he has told us he fled to Madian, a city on the shore of the Red sea, so named from one of Abraham's sons by Keturah, says, 'He met Raguel's daughters taking care of their father's flocks, for it was the service which belonged to the women in that country of the Troglodites, *δια το ταυτην υπηρεσιαν ποιησαι και γυναιξιν επιχωριοι παρα τοις Τρωγλοδυταις.*' So that he considered the inhabitants of that country as Troglodites, who were indisputably reckoned a people of Ethiopia. Elsewhere as he tells us, *Ibid.* 10. 1. That the Ethiopians were neighbours, *προσοικοι*, to the Egyptians, he speaks, *ibid.* 9. 5. 3. of the Arabians, as those who dwelt nearest to Ethiopia, *Αραβων των ενιστα της Αιθιοπιας κατοικουντων.*

municated† to them.—A third class, in fine, though they cannot admit Herodotus's account of the reason of this practice of the Egyptians as very probable, that they performed circumcision for the sake of cleanliness, apprehend superstition might dictate it to

† Dr. Middleton, Letter to Dr. Waterland, pp. 31. 32. says, ' Though all these opinions, (he means these which derive circumcision to the Egyptians from Abraham, or Joseph, or Jacob and his sons, or the friendship with the Jews in Solomon's time, for all these he had mentioned,) ' are wholly groundless and irrational, yet none seems so ' improbable as that which you embrace, that this custom was carried ' into Egypt by Abraham's posterity, the Arabian Ishmaelites; for how ' can it be imagined, that a set of wild Arabs, or wandering shepherds, ' an occupation abominable to the Egyptians, (Gen. xvi. 34.) of all ' men the most barbarous and illiterate, could have authority enough ' with a polite and learned nation, to establish so odious and painful a ' custom among them?' But not to repeat any former reflections, do we not see that the Ethiopians were a powerful people in Moses's time? Josephus, Antiq. 2. 10. 1. represents, that they made incursions into Egypt then, and carried away much spoil, that they defeated the Egyptians in a pitched battle, penetrated even to Memphis and the sea, no city being able to resist them, and over-ran the whole country, so that the Egyptians were reduced to great distress? And do we not further see, that they brought immense armies into the field in following ages, against Asa king of Judah, 2 Chron. xiv. 9. and xvi. 8.?—My late worthy friend Mr Brekel of Liverpool, hath supposed the shepherd-kings, who, according to Manetho in Josephus, subdued Egypt, and reigned over it several hundred years, to have been Arabians, who invaded it soon after the children of Israel left it, when, being in a weak and broken state, they would be an easy prey to their enemies, and hath thought they imposed the rite of circumcision on their Egyptian subjects, while they again more readily submitted to their requirements in the matter, from their knowledge that it had been observed by the Israelites, whom God had so lately honoured with most peculiar tokens of his favour. See his Dissertation on Circumcision; and if his notion be true, it opens an easy account of its prevalence among the Egyptians.

them, as well as other rites to an equal or greater degree painful; and indeed what might not superstition, in that measure in which they were under its sway, make them do or suffer, though no others were considered as a model or pattern to be followed in it?

But it seems to me of less importance, to fix the era and mean of the entrance of this † ceremony among them, than hath been pretended. It might very well be of later use among the Egyptians and Arabians than in Abraham's family, though we cannot tell at what time, or by what causes, it was begun to be used by them; this is nothing, if I am not deceived, but what hath happened since with regard to many civil usages, and is in this case less strange, when so many books are perished, from which we might have received information.

This section hath been † long, but if the reasoning

† Dr. Middleton *ibid.* seems to lay great stress on this, that they who think circumcision was propagated from the Hebrews to other nations, cannot agree either on the person who first introduced it, or the period of time when it was first brought into Egypt; and so do others. — I may observe here, though the Israelites discovered a strong inclination to imitate Egyptian customs in making the golden calf, after an abode of 200 years in Egypt, as such writers remind us, this can be no evidence that God commanded it to Abraham 400 years before and upward, to gratify such a bias in him; who had made but a short visit there about 20 years before; nor can it even be any proof that he re-injoined it to the Israelites, in compliance with such a temper in them after they left Egypt. For it is certain he appointed many rites opposite to those which prevailed among the Egyptians, the more to prevent their apostacy from his pure worship. Why therefore might not this be in that number?

† Indeed I had once and again thrown aside this disquisition for its prolixity, yet it appeared to me best upon the whole to canvass the matter, as Mr. Voltaire returns to it again and again.

hath been solid, and the representation of facts just, I flatter myself the reader will think his labour well spent; some great writers have maintained the superior antiquity of circumcision among the Egyptians, and from them all our infidel writers almost, after Tindal, have with an air of triumph displayed it.

SECTION XXII.

Of his assertion in his Philosophical Dictionary, that it was customary among the patriarchs to use an obscene rite in making a promise.

IN many or most of these misrepresentations of the sense of Scripture, which have been censured as they occurred in Mr. Voltaire's Philosophy of History, I have remarked any agreement which was between them and the accounts in his Philosophical Dictionary. There follow some instances which are peculiar to this piece, so far as I am acquainted with his works, or do now recollect them.

In the article of Ezekiel here, having asserted, *
 ‘ That it was customary, on any important promise,
 ‘ to touch the genitals of him to whom the promise
 ‘ was made,’ he adds, ‘ We have thought proper
 ‘ to render the *genitals* by *thigh*. Eliezer put his
 ‘ hand under Abraham’s thigh. The like Joseph
 ‘ does to Jacob. This had been a custom of great
 ‘ antiquity in Egypt.’

But where is there any record of such a shameful usage of long standing in Egypt, as he affirms? Or what evidence is there that the same was practised

* Phil. Dict. page 166.

by Eliezer and Joseph? I am aware, indeed, that some commentators, of no mean abilities and fame, have supposed an allusion to the covenant of circumcision in the ceremony of putting the hand under the thigh, which Abraham† enjoined his servant, and Jacob directed his son to use, and which they afterwards respectively observed when they swore to fulfil their desires. Nevertheless, though the conceit be pious, it hath no sure foundation. Nor did even they who proposed this notion of it, ever imagine such a filthy action was done as our author describes. As the rites of swearing have been various in different ages and countries, what hinders us to say, that it was then the received form among the Hebrews, for the person who swore that he would do any thing according to the request of another, to put his hand under his thigh, for whose gratification the promise was made, and with the greatest solemnity ratified. And, indeed, this was an easy and natural symbol of being under his direction, wherefore he would be pliant and obsequious to his will. The original word unquestionably signifies *thigh*.—‘Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew that shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh, in the sinew that shrank.’ Gen. xxxii. 25, 32. ‘Thus saith the Lord, Gather—every good piece, (into the pot) the thigh, and the shoulder, fill it with the choice bones.’ Ez. xxiv. 4. as it is used of the part from which the sword hangs down. —‘Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, put every man his sword by his side.’—Exod. xxxii. 27.

† See Gen. xxiv. 2, 3. and xlvii. 29, 30.

So also Judg. iii. 16, 21. Ps. xlv. 3. Nor does Josephus intimate that he understood it in a different sense on this occasion, For, representing the ceremony to have been performed by both Abraham and Eliezer, he says, 'Abraham * sends the oldest of his servants to ask the daughter of Laban, having bound him by great promises. And these were in this manner. Having put their hands under one another's thighs, they afterwards call upon God as a witness of things that shall be.' About the stipulation which Jacob exacted in this manner from Joseph, he is silent †.

SECTION XXII.

Of his misrepresentation of Paul and Peter's conduct at Antioch, in the same work.

LET us next see how injurious he is in his representation of Paul and Peter's conduct. 'St. Paul, says he, keenly reproached him (Peter) for eating prohibited meats, as pork, puddings, hares, eels,

* Antiq. i. 16. 1. — Εὐδοκίμοις μετὰ λαοῦ πιστεύουσιν γίνονται δὲ αὐταὶ τὸν τοιοῦτον τρόπον. Ὑπο τῶν μὲν ἀλλήλων τὰς χεῖρας πασάσσοντες, οὕτως ἐπικαλῶνται τὸν Θεὸν μαρτυρῶν τῶν ὑπομένων.

† I know, a foreigner, famous for many singularities of opinion, would understand the Hebrew word יָמִינִי in Gen. xxiv. 2. and xlvii. 29, 30. to signify the *right hand*, in particular the *wrist* thereof, and produces many examples of swearing by the right hand from ancient writers. Von der Hardt 'De Juramento per Dextrae carpum commentatio. But it seems to be a sense altogether unsupported. Indeed, in Ezek. xxi. 12. where we have 'smite on thy thigh,' the seventy have 'smite on thy hand:' but, probably, this was through mistake in reading יָרֵשֶׁב for יָדֵשֶׁב.

&c. ‘ Peter, in justification of himself, alledged, that, ‘ upon the sixth hour, he had seen the heavens ‘ opened, and a large table-cloth full of eels; beasts, ‘ and birds, descending from the four quarters of ‘ the heavens, and that the voice of an angel called ‘ out, Kill and eat.’† The only place of Scripture on which he can found this reproach by Paul against Peter, is Gal. ii. 11—17. There we are told Peter separated himself from the Gentile Christians at Antioch, after free converse with them, on the arrival of some disciples from Jerusalem, who were zealous for imposing the ritual ordinances of Moses upon them, as needful to be observed, in order to their enjoyment of the favour of God, and the blessedness of heaven. Moreover, we read, that, by the influence of his example, in declining intercourse with these Gentile believers, contrary to inward judgment, through a mean compliance with the principles of the zealots for the Jewish law, in order to ingratiate himself with them, others were also drawn away to carry with like distance and shyness toward them, and among others, the excellent Barnabas, who had been very active and successful in bringing uncircumcised heathens into the fellowship of the gospel, and its privileges. Paul, therefore, did hereon, in a public manner, address Peter thus; ‘ If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner ‘ of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?’ That is, If thou, who art a Jew by descent, hast lived in the same way as the Gentiles do, not practising these abstinences and other ceremonies, which

† Article Peter, page 297.

the Mosaic law requires in Jews, why dost thou now by behaving as if the Gentile Christians were unworthy of communion, and were not yet the people of God, lay them under a necessity of conforming themselves to all the appointments of that law, and living according to all the rites and usages of the Jews, about food, days of rest, washings of the body, &c.? Now, this may indeed imply, that Peter had ate prohibited meats, as pork, puddings, hares, eels, &c. because his living after the manner of the Gentiles, may comprehend, among other instances of conformity to their customs, his free use and participation of them when they were presented at table. Yet certainly Paul never meant to reproach him for it, but only for shunning the Gentile converts, who made no scruple nor hesitation to feed on them, as if they were thereby polluted and defiled, and rendered unfit for acceptance with God, and society with Jewish believers, after he himself had been a partaker of such diet. To have upbraided Peter for the use of these meats, or the neglect of other Jewish ordinances simply, would have been to have blamed him for what was his own conduct among the Gentiles. For he complied with their practices in things innocent and indifferent, of which sort was his eating food forbidden by the law of Moses, after its obligation ceased; and he esteemed it to be his duty to do so, in order to save them: as again, he shewed like condescension toward the Jews, in following their rites, and thought himself bound to it, that he might gain them. Why, therefore, does Mr. Voltaire, without any reason, represent him thus inconsistent?—Besides, which may be still more decisive, for Paul to have found fault

with Peter for taking this liberty, of paying no regard to Jewish rules of abstinence about meat, would have been to defeat the end he aimed at, and to justify Peter in that very separation from Gentile Christians which he intended to censure, and to confirm him in that very estrangement from them which he studied to correct. For it would have been telling him in effect, that he should be tenacious of these restrictions about meat which the Jews observed, and the Gentiles despised. And who can suppose Paul so imprudent, as to talk in this manner?—As to the reply which Mr. Voltaire puts into Peter's mouth, in vindication of himself, it hath no foundation in the history. For he made no apology for his behaviour at all, but submitted to the rebuke, and acquiesced, sensible he had been in the wrong. It is true, Peter had such a vision of a table-cloth, or rather sheet, as he speaks of, not, however, descending from the four quarters of heaven, which is his description, but knit at the four corners, and let down from heaven to earth, full of all sorts of animals, and he heard such a voice as he mentions. But this was a considerable time before this interview with Paul * at Antioch. Nor did he bring any argument from it to excuse his pusillanimous and cowardly procedure there. The attempt, indeed, of a defence from it, must have been vain. For to have recited it, would rather have made against him. The design of that

* This vision, together with Cornelius's conversion, Acts x. is supposed to have happened in the forty-first year of our Saviour's nativity, according to the vulgar computation, and the interview at Antioch to have been no earlier than the year forty-nine or fifty, and after the meeting of the council at Jerusalem, Acts xv.

vision and voice, being to prepare him to go to uncircumcised Gentiles, and to dispose him to receive them into the church, and treat them as heirs of the same blessings with believers of the circumcision, upon their faith in Christ, without any requirement of obedience to the statutes of Moses.

How contrary to truth then Mr. Voltaire's account of this transaction! *

* It is to be carefully observed, there was no difference of principle or sentiment between Peter and Paul, about the freedom of the Gentiles from all obligation to observe the Mosaic rites, that they might be saved. The spring of Peter's conduct was not a persuasion of the necessity of their observation of them, unto the blessedness of heaven, but a dread of the displeasure of the Jews which hurried him to act against his inward sense and judgment about the liberty of the Gentiles from that yoke, as he had declared it, Acts xv. 7—11. For, not to insist that ὁπισθεῖν might be rendered so as to denote his disguising his real opinion by his behaviour, more than in our version, which runs, 'He withdrew,' it is expressly remarked, 'That the rest of the Jews dissembled together with him,' συνυποκρίθησαν αὐτῷ, which implies, that he first, and they after his example, in scrupulously avoiding the Gentile believers as unclean, disavowed their inward apprehensions, through fear of the circumcision.

SECTION XXIV.

Of his false relation there of Peter's behaviour to Ananias and his wife, and his censures thereof, together with the observation he ascribes to Erasmus, that the head of the Christian religion began his apostleship by denying Jesus Christ.

A LITTLE after, and in the same * page, he goes on thus, 'Casaubon could not approve Peter's behaviour to Ananias and his wife, who were a good sort of people; What right, says he, had a Jew, a slave under the Romans, to order or allow all who believed in Jesus to sell their substance, and lay the produce at his feet? Were an Anabaptist preacher at London to order his brethren to bring him all their money, would he not be taken up as a mover of sedition, a robber, and as such sent to Tyburn? Was it not a horrid thing to strike Ananias dead, only because out of the money for which he had sold his estate, he scarcely reserved a few pounds against a rainy day, bringing the far greater part to Peter. Scarce was the breath out of Ananias's body, when in comes his wife. Peter, instead of kindly informing her that he had just killed her husband for keeping a few pence, and telling her to take care of what she had, allures her into the snare. He asks her whether her husband had brought in all his money for the saints; the poor woman answers, Yes, and instantly drops down dead. Something hard this!

* Philos. Diction. Article Peter, page 297.

But what cause to complain of dissingenuity and unjust censure here!

Whether Casaubon disapproved Peter's behaviour to Ananias and his wife, and expressed his disapprobation of it in such terms as Voltaire makes him use, I will not be positive. Had our author given me any direction in which of his works I might have read his sentiments upon the subject, I would have endeavoured to know exactly how the fact stood, and to satisfy the world whether he sheltered himself with justice under his authority. As he has been silent about this, I must leave the tale upon his credit with the reader, who perhaps may with myself much suspect some aggravation in it. Be it however, that he hath transcribed his account of the scripture history, and his cavils against it, from this author with exactness, instead of passing upon us under his name a production of his own mint, either in whole or in part. Still he must be answerable for the same, since in copying he shews manifest tokens of complacency and approbation.

Now is there not here a great deal of misrepresentation? In Luke's account, Acts, v. there is no mention what proportion of the purchase money Ananias and Sapphira agreed to withhold; it is only said, 'that Ananias, with the privacy or knowledge of his wife, kept back from the price of the lands which he had sold, and having brought a certain part thereof, laid it down at the apostles feet.' Nevertheless, Mr. Voltaire is positive, that he presented the far greater part to Peter, and reserved the far lesser part of it to himself against future exigencies; yea, that he kept only a few pounds against a rainy

day, or as he has it still more diminutively, only a few pence.—Farther, he makes Peter to have asked Sapphira, whether her husband had brought all the money for the faints; which is causing him propose a very absurd question, since having been absent from him for some time, she could not answer Yes or No, without a previous account of the sum he produced: whereas according to the sacred historian, he only inquired ‘Whether the land had been sold for so much money,’ mentioning the quantity he had offered as its entire price; which was what she could tell at once, as she had concurred or joined with him in the alienation of the property. By consequence, he no more allured her into a snare, according to his accusation, than one person may be said to deal so by another, who examines him about a plain and recent fact, about which there is no room for misapprehension or forgetfulness, without giving him information that a person concerned hath already suffered for the denial of the truth.—Finally, there is no intimation through the narrative of any * apostolical order to sell the land, as our author is willing to suppose; on the contrary, Peter, in reasoning with Ananias, proceeds upon this principle, that he was under no obligation to dispose of his estate, but that it was free to him to retain it; for, says he, ver. 4. ‘While it (the land he means) remained with thee, was it not thine own?’ Was it not altogether at thy

* To Peter, who is said to have given this order, the epithet of *slave* which Mr. Voltaire hath bestowed on him, belonged in no sense but this, that he was a subject of Judea, which had been reduced to the state of a province of the Roman empire, the inhabitants still living according to their own laws, and enjoying their own property as before.

choice and pleasure to sell it, or not? And indeed we read of no injunction upon any of the Christian converts to sell houses or lands, and bring the money which they received from them into a public fund for the use of the church.

Again, as there is such misrepresentation here, is there not also unjustifiable clamour against the apostle, for punishing this man and his wife with sudden death on account of their conduct. To vindicate their being struck dead, I need not labour to swell their sin, by fixing upon them a conviction of sacrilege, that is, of converting to their own purposes what they had devoted and consecrated to a religious use. This, I am aware, some have contended to be their crime; they have imagined, that upon seeing the liberality of others, and particularly of Barnabas, they had uttered with their lips a vow to God, or a promise to the church, at least formed in their hearts a solemn resolution of equivalent force, to sell their land, and to bestow the produce of its sale for the benefit and advantage of the members of Christ; that it was no longer therefore in their power, either not to dispose of the estate, or not to bring in the full price without being guilty of sacrilege; an iniquity, which though it might be expiated or atoned for by the sacrifice of a ram without blemish, according to the law of Moses, where it was committed through ignorance, upon restitution of the thing, and the addition of a fifth part beyond the estimation or value of it, Levit. v. 15, 16. yet where it was done wilfully and presumptuously as here, exposed to be cut off from the congregation of the Lord by the sword of the magistrate, or the

hand of heaven, without remedy, Numb. xv. 30. Deut. xxiii. 21—23. Accordingly, they urge, that the Greek word which we render here ‘to keep back,’ but Titus, ii. 10. ‘To purloin,’ signifies, to take surreptitiously, or seize in a clandestine manner for our use what does not belong to us but to another, whence the Latin in both places translates it by *fraudare*, to defraud; and that it is applied by the Greek interpreters of the book of Joshua, to Achan’s taking of the accursed thing, that is, of the spoils of Jericho which were devoted to the treasure of the house of the Lord, Joshua, vii. 1. and by the author of the history of the Maccabees, to Menelaus’s stealing vessels of gold out of the temple in Jerusalem, 2 Macab. iv. 32. And they explain Peter’s interrogatories to him in a suitableness to this hypothesis, ‘While it remained with thee, was it not thine own?’ While the land was unsold, hadst not thou the right of property in it, wherefore thou mightest lawfully dedicate it for the poor? Wast not thou the rightful owner of it, and so thy vow to dispose of it binding, when otherwise it must have been null and void? ‘And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?’ Didst not thou receive the full price of it into thy possession, so that thou mightest have performed thy vow in all its latitude and extent, when otherwise, had part of the purchase money been withheld from thee by the buyer, it would not have been possible for thee to accomplish it?—But though I am not sensible of any bias to extenuate their wickedness, I cannot adopt this account. To me it seems inadmissible, partly because there is no mention of any such vow or promise about selling the land, and bringing

its price into the public stock or fund of the church, (to which it hath been doubted, whether an inward determination of it, was it recorded, could impose or constitute an equal obligation,) and partly because it is inconsistent with the natural sense and obvious meaning of Peter's words, which is, that he was at liberty to dispose of his estate or keep it, and after the sale to bestow its price for common use, or reserve it for himself. For this excludes all imputation of sacrilege in detaining any share of it, there being no room for such a charge, but upon the supposition, that it was no more his, as already given away by a vow to God, or a promise to the Christian society. Nor is there any necessity to have recourse to that scheme. Even without the accumulated and additional guilt of sacrilege, there appears sufficient demerit on the part of Ananias and Sapphira, to vindicate the righteousness of their fate. For what a complication of deliberate and premeditated vanity, covetousness, falsehood, fraud and impiety here! When there was no law requiring them to part with their land, and bestow its price for the support of the church, and therefore no necessity laid upon them to take such a measure, they of their own motion and accord, professed to employ the whole money they acquired by its sale this way, that they might seem inflamed with as vehement an affection to Christ, who for mens sake became poor, and animated with as liberal a temper toward their fellow-disciples as others; and that they might enjoy the fame and reputation of those, who conferred all their substance upon the community of believers. But amidst all this specious shew of zeal and public-spiritedness, stimulated by avarice they kept back, for

their own occasions, part of the price. Nay, being interrogated, whether the sum for which the land was sold was brought in, they had recourse to a gross lie, and averred it was, against inward sense and conviction, in hope their falsehood would be undiscovered, that they might possess the praise of being very bountiful, and establish the same claim to a share in the distribution of the charitable fund of the church for their maintenance, which those had, who had deposited all their substance in the hands of the apostles, and left nothing in their own private purse, though against all justice, as they had detained part of their wealth secretly for themselves. This also they did at a time when themselves acknowledged, upon the most striking demonstrations, that these apostles had received the Holy Ghost in his miraculous and extraordinary powers, so that they could not attempt to deceive them, without putting an high indignity upon God himself, who thereby resided in them, as if their real behaviour might be concealed from his observation, and elude his knowledge.

How equitable then, that so heinous and atrocious an offence, which, by its being suffered to pass with impunity, or with gentle reproof, might have easily spread, should be punished in the awful manner it was, that the authority of the apostles, instead of falling into contempt, might become more venerable, and the dignity of the Spirit of God, instead of being exposed to the ridicule of unbelievers as a merely human Spirit, which could be imposed on by false appearances of piety and liberality, to the great

hindrance of the spread of the gospel, might be more convincingly displayed, to its propagation and furtherance; and that all the nominal disciples of Jesus might be rendered more cautious in offending against the sacred and eternal rules of sincerity and uprightness! And how suitable to the method of divine administration, to animadvert upon this first instance of the crime with signal sharpness! For so under the oecumeny of Moses, God ordered the man who first gathered sticks on the sabbath, and the man who first stole of any accursed thing, to be stoned to death; in like manner, the man who first burned incense with common or strange fire, and the man, who, being neither a priest nor a Levite, first touched the ark, he struck dead upon the spot: * as indeed it is the practice of wise and prudent legislators among men, to punish in an exemplary way the first trespass of any kind after the enactment and publication of a law, that it may not multiply and increase.

For these reasons, in perfect justice and consummate wisdom Ananias and Sapphira suffered a sudden death; he, because he kept back part of the price of the land, and lied about it, not unto men, but unto God; and she, because she affirmed he had sold the land for the sum he had brought, when she knew the matter was otherwise, having agreed with him to tempt or try the sagacity and discernment of the Spirit of the Lord.—Yet they were not subjected to this swift destruction, upon any imprecation of Peter, or any request of his, that this calamity might befall them, but only upon his annunciation

* See Numb. xv. 32—36. Joshua, vii. 25. Levit. x. 1, 2. 2 Sam. vi. 7.

of it by the spirit of prophecy, that the event might appear not casual, but designed for the warning and admonition of all. There is therefore no shadow of reason for blaming the apostle.

Mr. Voltaire subjoins, ‘ Corringius asks, why ‘ Peter, who thus demolishes those who brought him ‘ alms, did not rather go and kill all the doctors, ‘ who had a hand in putting Jesus to death, and had ‘ scourged himself several times;’ And then he makes Corringius, whoever *this is, exclaim, or cries out himself, for I pretend not to say which is the case, ‘ Fie ‘ Peter, to kill two Christians who had brought you a ‘ good purse of money, and they who crucified your ‘ God you allow to live!’ But, to omit that Peter, when this fraud of Ananias and Sapphira was punished, had not been once chastised with stripes by the Jewish doctors, far less several times, how unreasonable this reflection! Those men who put Jesus to death, did

* I am ready to think he intends Corringius, who was a professor of Medicine and Politics at Helmstadt, and a counsellor of several German princes, about the middle of last century; but, though his works make several volumes, I am altogether unacquainted with them, and therefore cannot say whether the question and exclamation here agree to him or not. I have reason to think, he counted it no dangerous opinion to allow the Hebrew text was here and there corrupted, when a scheme was formed of a new German translation of the Scripture, by authority of Augustus duke of Brunswick and Luneburgh, in his time; but that he expressed himself in the manner Mr. Voltaire represents, about Peter, I do not know any other evidence. I have seen an account of an edition of Grotius on the truth of the Christian religion, with his notes on the first and second books, among those of other learned men. And if they were in defence or confirmation of Grotius’s reasoning, as I suppose, it is unlikely he should have wrote in such language, as Mr. Voltaire here represents.

it ignorantly; they were not aware that they sinned, but thought they did God service; for they looked upon him as a false prophet, and a deceiver of the nation, whose life was forfeited to his country, as this same apostle himself declares, Acts iii. 17. and his brother Paul owned long afterwards, Acts xiii. 27. Whereas Ananias and Sapphira could not believe it was innocent to withhold part of the price of their lands, when they pretended to bestow the whole upon the church, and to endeavour to put a fallacy and trick upon the apostles about this matter, who were, according to their own profession, the servants of God, commissioned and authorized to shew his will to the world, and endowed with supernatural abilities for persuading the world of it.

Farther, as to what our author calls a pretty singular remark of Erasmus concerning Peter, ‘ That the head of the Christian religion began his apostleship by denying Jesus Christ, and the high-priest of Judaism began his ministry by making a golden calf, and worshipping it.’ I need not give myself much trouble with it. Every reader may easily perceive, that Peter’s denial happened long after he was made an apostle, while it was also only a short and momentary prevalence of fear, succeeded with deep sorrow and contrition for it, and a long life of steadfast adherence to, and activity for the gospel of Jesus, amidst all the evils and inconveniencies which Jewish and Gentile enemies threatned or inflicted upon him.—And that Aaron’s transgression was committed a considerable while ere he was vested with the sacerdotal office, or made high-priest to the Israelites, and brought under the additional obligation which it in-

ferred to oppose such a flagrant corruption in their principles and manners. See Exod. xxxii. and xl. Nor is it unlikely, since the falshood of the remark is so glaring, that he hath injured that great scholar in ascribing to him what was only his own suggestion. So himself tells us*, in a passage above censured, that Aaron was only ‘ Created high pontiff after the shameful action of making and worshipping the calf.’

S E C T I O N XXV.

Of his account, in the same piece, under the article Resurrection, of James’s advice to Paul about observing all the ceremonies in the temple, that he might persuade every person he still continued to conform to the law, and of the effect of it.

UNDER the article Resurrection, again, Mr. Voltaire writes thus, † ‘ The Acts of the Apostles mention a very singular transaction, and well worthy of notice. St. James, and several of his companions, advised St. Paul, though so thorough a Christian, to go into the temple of Jerusalem, and observe all the ceremonies of the antient law, to the end all may know, say they, that every thing which is said of you is false, and that you still continue to observe Moses’s law. St. Paul, accordingly, went into the temple for seven days; but being known on the seventh, he was accused of having brought strangers into it with a view of prophaning it.’

* See above, part 2. chapter 1. sect. 2. page 53.

† Phil. Dict. page 322, 323.

But is this a just account? Quite otherwise. Neither did James, and the elders of the church at Jerusalem advise Paul to observe all the ceremonies of the antient law, but only to practise conformably to it in a particular instance. ‘We,’ say they, Acts xxi. 21, 24. ‘have four men who have a vow on them; ‘them take, and purify thyself with them, and be ‘at charges with them, that they may shew their ‘heads,’ and offer the appointed sacrifices, Num. vi. 14. Nor did they desire him to do this, to the end all might know that every thing which was said of him was false, which would have been very wild and ridiculous; but only that all might be thereby satisfied, more than they would be by any verbal declaration of his sentiments and doctrine, that the information they had received of him was false, viz. that he taught all the Jews who were dispersed and scattered among the Gentiles, to forsake the law, saying, ‘That they ought not to circumcise their children, ‘neither to walk after the customs,’ that is, that it was offensive to God, and unlawful or criminal for them to observe the Mosaic rites, wherefore they were bound in duty to forbear their use. And indeed this was a principle which he never held or inculcated, tho’ he affirmed it was unnecessary to submit to them, in order to attain the favour of God, and the blessedness of heaven.—It is true they add, in explaining the intention of their counsel, ‘But may know that thou ‘thyself walkest orderly, or regularly, and keepst ‘the law.’ Nevertheless, their meaning cannot be, that all might be persuaded, that he did, at all times, and in all places, act according to its prescriptions, but only, that they might be convinced that he did,

at some seasons, and upon some occasions, observe its institutions; which was the case, where he found the same expedient to remove prejudice, and secure more extensive usefulness, instead of abstaining from all conformity to them as in itself sinful and forbidden.—The term in the original, στοιχεῖς, which we translate here, *walk orderly*, as if an invariably even and uniform agreement in behaviour to the appointments of Moses was thought of, is by us rendered in all other places† simply, *walk*. With the same limitation or restriction words as general are also understood, Gal. ii. 14. when Paul tells Peter, ‘ That he, being a Jew, lived after ‘ the manner of the Gentiles, and not as did the Jews.’ For the allowed sense is, not that he lived constantly according to the customs of the Gentiles, about meats and days, &c. but that he did so at some times. Besides, Paul’s compliance here, could not prove any other thing, than that he reckoned it innocent to practise these Jewish ceremonies; for how could it be an evidence that he judged it his duty, or necessary to avoid the displeasure of God, and the penal consequences of it? Finally, it cannot be reasonably supposed that his friends aimed to prove more by his action now, since it could not but be notour to multitudes in Jerusalem, at the feast of Pentecost*, that

† See Rom. iv. 12. Galat. v. 25. vi. 16. Phillip. iii. 16. And the Greek here is, ‘ Thou thyself walkest keeping the law, Στοιχεῖς καὶ αὐτὸς τὸν νόμον φυλάσσων.

* It is well known this was the second of the three grand festivals on which all the Jewish males were required to appear before the Lord at Jerusalem. The length of the days, as it fell in the summer, made it more commodious for the Jews to gather thither than from the different places of their dispersion. And what a concourse there might be now from the countries where Paul had preached, may be

he often lived as a Gentile in respect of the ordinances of the ritual law. As this was the case, to have proposed to evince that he judged their observation incumbent on him every where, and requisite to divine acceptance, would have been extremely foolish, as it would have given his and their enemies, a fine handle to triumph and insult over them, by an easy and clear confutation of his having held such an opinion.

Such was the nature and design of the advice to which Paul yielded; very different, therefore, from Mr. Voltaire's representation of it; till, not on the seventh day, as he says, nor, indeed, when the seven days were almost finished, as our version hath it, but, probably †, soon after these seven days of purification commenced, which were to run before the oblation of the sacrifices, that should close the vow upon which he acted, he was interrupted, calumniated, and traduced, and violently apprehended by certain Asiatic Jews in the manner which Luke relates.— And in Paul's falling in with this counsel, what was there blameable? We are not under an obligation to justify Paul's actions at all times, more than Peter's, as Dr. Lardner * hath observed. Nevertheless, it is judged from the enumeration we have of the stranger Jews and proselytes, at that feast of Pentecost, in which the Holy Ghost was poured down on the disciples, Acts ii, 1—12.

† The Greek is literally, 'When the seven days were about to be accomplished. These seven days, it is plain, commenced only the third day after his arrival in Jerusalem. And it is likely, it was not near their conclusion, that his arrest happened, from his words in his apology to Felix, which was at least seven days after the tumult in the temple. Compare Acts xxii. 30. xxiii. 12. 32. xxiv. 1—11. and Doddridge on the Acts.

* See his Remarks upon Dr. Ward's Dissertations, page 164, &c.

difficult to shew there is any reason to grant he was at present criminal. Was it not agreeable to his own avowed conduct on other occasions, even when there was no recommendation and importunity of any to observe the Mosaic ceremonies, that he might obviate offence, and promote the success of his ministry? So he declares, 1 Cor. ix. 21, 22. ‘Unto the Jews I became a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law.’ And particular examples may be seen of this condescension, for the furtherance of the gospel, Acts xvi. 3, 4. xviii. 18—21.—Was it not also according to his own most excellent rules of brotherly love and charity, that they who were strong, or understood their liberty from the obligation of the Mosaic appointments, should forbear the use of that liberty when it might offend, and be a stumbling block to weaker brethren, that is, cause them fall into sin, and into disquietude of mind and punishment, and so create evils to them far superior to any inconveniences, which restraint and self-denial would bring upon them who had no scruple or hesitation about the lawfulness of departing from these abrogated rules? Thus he writes, Rom. xiv. 13—15. ‘Let us therefore, judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother’s way. I know and am persuaded, by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.’

and verses 19, 20. ' Let us therefore follow after
' the things which make for peace, and things where-
' with one may edify another. For meats destroy
' not the work of God.' And he exhorts, 1 Cor. x.
32, 33. ' Give none offence, neither to the Jews,
' nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:
' even as I please all men in all things, not seeking
' mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they
' may be saved.'

S E C T I O N XXVI.

Of his remark, under the same article, upon Paul's
exclamation before the council, ' Of the hope and
' resurrection of the dead I am called in question.'

MR. VOLTAIRE proceeds, ' Now Paul perceiv-
' ing that some of the croud were Sadducees, and
' others Pharisees, he cried out in the council, " Bre-
" thren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; it
" is for the hope of another life, and the resurrection
" of the dead, that I am in danger of being con-
" demned." Acts xxiii. 6. In all this affair not a word
' had been said about the resurrection of the dead;
' but Paul's drift in mentioning it, was to raise a
quarrel * between the Pharisees and Sadducees.'

* Here Mr. Voltaire plainly supposes that the Pharisees believed
a resurrection of the dead. For, if they had not maintained it, how
could Paul's saying he was in danger of being condemned for that tenet,
have created a quarrel between them and the Sadducees who de-
nied it? Accordingly, he goes on to quote Luke's account of the
strife which arose upon Paul's declaration, ' Because the Sadducees say

Why, however, does he make this observation, unless to insinuate, as Orobio the Jew is said to have maintained, in Limborch's conference with him, that Paul here behaved in a manner unworthy the cha-

' there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees confess both.' Acts xxiii. 7, 8. He next observes, ' It has been affirmed that Job, who, doubtless, is of great antiquity, was acquainted with the doctrine of the resurrection;' and in proof of it, the following words are quoted, ' I know that my redeemer liveth,' &c. but he explains them to mean no more than his recovery from his distemper, page 324. Finally, after a short paragraph about the date of the sect of the Pharisees, he subjoins, ' Many of these Pharisees believed that it was only the Jews who were to rise again; and that as to the rest of mankind, they were not worth while. Others affirmed that the resurrection would be only in Palestine, and that bodies buried in other parts would be secretly conveyed to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, there to be united to their soul.' Nothing then can be more evident, than that, according to our author in this passage, the Pharisees held a resurrection of the dead, at least a national one. Nevertheless, in his *Philosophy of History*, he is positive that they rejected this principle, chap. 37. page 176. ' As for the Pharisees, they adopted the metempsychosis, and not the resurrection.' And the same thing indeed hath been asserted by others, that they embraced the opinion of a present transmigration of souls into different bodies at death, like the Pythagoreans and Platonists, and not the notion of a resurrection; while it hath been also thought, that traces of that sentiment are to be seen in the accounts, which some of Jesus's contemporaries are reported to have given of him, ' That he was John the Baptist, or Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets,' Matth. xvi. 14. and in the inquiry which his own disciples made concerning the man that was born blind, John ix. 2. ' Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind.' Yea, that vestiges of it appear in the book of Wisdom, which is a more ancient Jewish composition, the author whereof says, viii. 20. ' Being good, I came into a body undefiled.' But though this may have been said by others, in consistence with themselves, certainly he does not appear consistent with himself here.

rafter of an upright and generous person, in order to avoid perfecution? But is there indeed any ground for fuch a charge upon the apoftle? I think not. To evince this, it deferves attention, that Paul himfelf had pleaded in defence of his own conduét, on the preceding day, before the Jews, at the bar of whose fanhedrim or council he now flood, Jefus's appearance to him in the road to Damafcus, and rebuke of him for perfecuting his difciples, and his direction to him at another time to depart from Jerufalem, becaufe the Jews would not receive his testimony, to preach the gofpel to the Gentiles, Acts xxii. 1—21. Now all this fuppofed the refurrection of Jefus from the dead, after he had been crucified at the follicitation of their rulers; while again it was an article of the gofpel which Paul every where taught, that becaufe Jefus was rifen, the dead alfo would, at a future period, be reftored unto life. Further, there is reason to think he was in part brought into judgment, and fubjected to the prefent profecution for publifhing the doctrine of a future refurrection. It is true, there were other things which raifed the indignation and fury of the Jews againft him, viz. his perfuading the world that Jefus, whom they had flain and hanged on a tree, was the Mefſiah foretold by their prophets, and his inviting the heathens unto the favour of God, and the bleffednefs of heaven, by faith in him, without conformity to their ritual law. Nevertheless, it is probable his zeal in propagating that principle, that the dead would rife, had alfo its ſhare here. For how natural was it for the Sadducean party, many of whom were in places of dignity and power, to become, on this account,

his violent and unrelenting enemies, as the tendency of his labour was to overthrow entirely their favourite tenets of no future existence and retribution. Accordingly, the same historian, who records this attack upon Paul, in an earlier period discovers that the chief persons at Jerusalem were exasperated against all the apostles, and threw them into prison, because they were averse to their spreading the belief of a resurrection of the dead, as exemplified and confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus. 'The priests, says he, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, (the apostles) being grieved that they taught the people, and preached, through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead, and they laid hands on them, and put them in hold,' &c. Acts iv. 1, 2, 3. And shortly after, when they were treated with like rage and severity by the high priest, and all them that were with him, he takes particular notice that they were the sect of the Sadducees, Acts v. 17. thereby leading us to conclude, that their notions gave them a greater prejudice against the gospel, and made them to be provoked in an eminent degree, by the industry and success of its ministers. But this being the case, where was Paul to blame for insincerity and deceit? He had not denied he was a Christian by saying he was a Pharisee, as indeed his being such, was a fact too notorious and public to be denied with any expectation of credit. He had only declared he agreed in opinion with the persons denominated Pharisees, which was true, it being a chief dogma of Jewish Pharisees, as it is of Christians, that good men will be raised to a life of happiness. And when he subjoined, 'Of the hope and resurrection

‘ of the dead I am called in question,’ or brought into judgment, as the word properly signifies, he still told the truth, his attachment to the doctrine of a blessed resurrection for holy men being a secret source and spring of the molestation that was now given him. Indeed he did not tell the whole truth, for there were likewise other causes of his being thus harassed. But under what obligation was he to do so in his circumstances? Surely it is lawful for us to conceal a part of the truth, when such reserve does no injury to others, and is conducive to our own benefit. So Grotius, Cumberland, Puffendorf, and other able moralists, have decided; and so the best men have practised, without incurring any censure for want of integrity and uprightness. For Moses mentioned only to Pharaoh, that he and his people would go three days journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord their God; not that they would proceed toward Canaan, *Exod. viii. 27*. And Jeremiah told only to the princes one subject of his conversation with king Zedekiah, when they inquired concerning it, namely his request that he might not be put into custody in Jonathan’s house; he was silent about the chief topic thereof, which was to assure him, that, if he would surrender to the Babylonian monarch, his city should not be burnt, nor his own life be destroyed, *Jerem. xxxviii. 24—28*. Nay, the prophet Samuel, by God’s own direction, shewed the elders of Bethlehem only one of his errands, in his journey to their town, ‘ That he came to sacrifice to the Lord;’ he forbore to speak of the other, which was to anoint Jesse’s son unto the kingdom, aware that it would irritate Saul, *1 Sam. xvi. 1*. Thus far

then the apostle was no way criminal, but altogether innocent. And if he was, it will scarcely, I believe, be pretended, that he merits any reproach for aiming, by the profession he made, while it expressed the truth, though not the whole truth, to divide his foes, that he might extricate himself from their malice, until a more favourable opportunity, instead of proceeding to open to them all the reasons of his change from Judaism to Christianity, and of his concern about the liberty of the Gentiles from Mosaic ceremonies, when they were in no disposition to give him a patient and candid hearing.

I have here supposed, that the Pharisees believed a resurrection of good men unto a life of happiness. For this St. Luke himself may seem a sufficient voucher, since he appears, through his history in general, well acquainted with the affairs of the Jews, and the principles of their sects. Left however Mr. Voltaire's assertion produced in the last note, ' That the Pharisees adopted the metempsychosis, and not the resurrection ;' together with the reasonings there mentioned, in support of that opinion, and the appeal that hath been sometimes made to Josephus in its behalf, should incline any to think, that Luke hath fallen into an error, where he says the Pharisees held a resurrection, and represents as above, that there arose, upon Paul's avowing his faith of it, a contention between them and the Sadducees, which proved advantageous to him, it will be proper to bestow a fuller consideration on this point.

The instances then which have been alledged from the New Testament, and the book of Wisdom, do not, I think, prove that the Pharisees held the doctrine of

transmigration, that is, of the passing of souls from body to body one after another in succession. For as to the question proposed to our Lord, concerning the man born blind, ‘ Did this man sin, that he was ‘ born blind?’ it is only an evidence, that it was a notion entertained by some, that souls * pre-existed, and that they were sent into bodies more or less perfect and commodious, according to their conduct in that antecedent state of being. The same observation may be applied to the passage from the Apocrypha, where the writer says, ‘ Being good,—I came into ‘ a body undefiled,’ Wisd. viii. 20. as indeed the Greek translator of the book of Job hath also made God himself, in his address to Job, speak upon this notion of the previous existence of souls; for he turns his words, Job, xxxviii. 21. thus *, ‘ I know thou ‘ wast formed then, (when the light was made, namely,) and that the number of thy years are many.’

And as to the conjectures made about Jesus Christ, that he was one of the Jewish prophets, or John the Baptist whom Herod had lately beheaded, (besides, that they afford no light what was the belief of the Pharisees, or even of the persons themselves that proposed such guesses, about the ordinary and established course of nature,) they seem to be grounded rather on the supposition of a miraculous resurrection, than of a transmigration. For it does not appear how Jesus could be any more Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the antient prophets, because the soul of Elias, or Jeremias, or another of the old prophets, dwelt in his

* So indeed, thought Philo, De Somniis, pp. 586, 592. and, De Gigantibus, p. 285.

* Οἶδα ἀρα ὅτι τότε γεγεννησαι, αριθμος δε ετων σε πολυς.

body, than some others had been such, whose bodies their souls must have inhabited, upon the hypothesis of a transmigration, in the interval of ages from their respective demises. And further, it did not at all agree to that scheme, to pronounce Jesus, who was at this time more than thirty years old, John the Baptist, on account of the residence of John's soul in his body, when he had been only killed, and by consequence, his soul only set free to remove into another body at its formation, but a few months or weeks before. Accordingly, the Evangelist Luke relates the reply of Christ's disciples, when he asked them, 'Whom say the people that I am?' in this manner, ix. 19. 'They answering, said, John the Baptist, but some say Elias, and others say that one of the old prophets is risen * again.' And such a resurrection of John, was the suggestion of Herod's mind, on hearing the fame of Jesus, instead of a transmigration. 'He said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the † dead, therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.' Matth. xiv. 2.

No more, in my opinion, do the accounts which Josephus gives of the sentiments of the Pharisees, concerning the fate of souls after death, authorize us to say they taught the metempsychosis, or successive translation of souls from body to body, as Mr. Basnage in † his history of the Jews, and others contend. I

* *Ανίστη.*

† *Αυτος ηγερθη απο των νεκρων.*

† Book 2. chap. 11. page 122. 'Josephus's authority, who speaks clearly about that matter, ought to prevail over the silence of the Sadducees, who do not reproach them with holding transmigration, and even of the gospel, which does not tax them with

readily own, that he uses expressions, in declaring their persuasion, which are capable of such a sense. For when he says, it is their belief, ‘ That virtuous souls § have a power of reviving.’ It cannot be denied, that his words, taken apart, may be understood of returning to life by immediate transmigration; and when he informs us again, ‘ They are convinced that the soul of good men—passes into another body †,’ this, it will not be questioned, might have been said, if they held it passed into a body, to which it never before bore any relation, as indeed it hath been much insisted on in favour of such an union, whatever inclination there may be to doubt or disallow its applicableness, if he intended their faith of its re-entry into the body which it formerly actuated. Nevertheless, there is nothing in the Jewish historian’s language here, which necessitates us to expound

‘ this error. He affirms that the Pharisees believed ‘ That the souls “ of the wicked were shut up in prison, and there suffered eternal torments, whilst that of good men found an easy return to life, and “ went into another body.’ This return of the spirit into life cannot ‘ be explained by the resurrection, for the immortal soul shall never ‘ die, nor rise again. Neither can it be said, that she shall go into another body at the last day, for, besides that she shall put on again, by ‘ the resurrection, the same body that she hath animated in this life, and ‘ that its qualities only shall be changed, the Pharisees did thereby ‘ represent the different state of good and wicked men immediately after death; and, therefore, to make Josephus point at the resurrection, is to father too quaint a thought upon him; a historian, who relates the opinions of a sect, speaks more naturally, and expresses himself with more perspicuity.’

§ Ταῖς δὲ αἰς ἀρετῆς ἐπιτηδεύουσιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ γέγονε) παύσονται τῷ ἀνάβιον. Antiq. 18. 1. 3.

† Μεταβαίνειν δὲ εἰς ἕτερον σῶμα τῇ (ψυχῇ) τῶν ἀγαθῶν. De Bello. 2. 8. 14.

him to mean, that the Pharisees were in the scheme of a metempsychosis, or transmigration, and not of a resurrection. For that a soul revives, may be affirmed of it, when it is reunited to its former body, as well as when it animates a new body. *Αναζωω* is applied thereunto in the New Testament itself, Rom. xiv 10. Rev. xx. 5. on which account, it is needless to mention examples of that use of it in ecclesiastical writers, otherwise it might easily be done; Why therefore might not *Αναζωω*, which is Josephus's word? as indeed it is so taken in a passage hereafter quoted, Maccab. vii. 9. And 'that a soul 'passes into another body,' is true, when it goes into a body altered and changed in its qualities, though the same, in regard of its substance and general figure, with that to which it was in a past period joined, as well as when it goes into a body, totally different from that which it before resided in, and used as its instrument of operation; *ἐντρον* being a term which occurs where is merely a circumstantial, as well as where there is an essential variation, as may be seen * Luke, ix. 29.

Is there then any thing in Josephus, to deliver us from hesitation and uncertainty, whether he teaches that the Pharisees held transmigration, that is, the transition of souls from body to body, in succession, as they were dislodged, and to guide us as a clew into a more precise discovery of their principles? I apprehend, there is enough to satisfy us, that such transmigration was not their hypothesis; for in the passage whence the first quotation is taken,

* *Και εἰδὸς τῷ προσώπῳ αὐτοῦ ἐντρον.*

he declares, ' There are rewards under† the earth for
 ' souls that have in this life been careful to practise
 ' virtue,' ere he speak of their power of reviving.
 Further, where he acquaints us, that he dissuaded some
 of his country-men from killing themselves in the
 cave, into which they had fled with himself for con-
 cealment, after the taking of the city Jotapata by
 the Romans, that they might not fall into Vespasi-
 an's hands, he tells us he urged this consideration
 upon them, ' That pure and obedient souls continue
 ' to exist, having received a most holy place in hea-
 ' ven, and thence, after the revolution of ages, are
 ' again housed in clean bodies; but that the souls of
 ' those who have offered violence to their bodies, are
 ' lodged in the darkest * Hades.' Finally, in his se-
 cond book against Apion, he writes thus, ' That
 ' their lawgiver had foretold, (and God had afforded
 ' the strongest proof of it,) that God granted to them
 ' who have observed his laws, and died if it was ne-
 ' cessary with cheerfulness for them, to be born a-
 ' gain, and to receive a better life in a‡ future period;
 where the term rendered ' to be born again,' is si-
 milar to that which in Mat. xix. 28. is interpreted by
 Mede, Capellus, and others, to signify, ' the resurrecti-
 ' on of the dead,' and is unquestionably to be so under-

† Ὑπο χθονος δικαιώσεις.

* Καθαράν δὲ καὶ ἡγήκοι μένουσιν αἱ ψυχαι, χωρὶν ὕδαν λαχού-
 σαι τὸν αἰῶνατον, ὡς ἐκ περιστροφῆς αἰῶνων αἰῶνις πάλιν ἀντιοί-
 κισται ὡμασιν, &c. De Bello, 3. 7. 5.

‡ — Γενώσθαι τε πάλιν καὶ βίον ἀμεινὸν λαβεῖν ἐκ περιστροφῆς
 αἰῶν. 30.

§ Thus Euseb. Histor. Eccles. 5. 1. sub fine. Say the churches
 of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul, in their letter to their Christian bre-

stood sometimes in other authors. Herein, however, Josephus must have reasoned, and declared Moses's doctrine, as a Pharisee, being himself of the sect of the Pharisees, according to his own narrative; for he * tells us, that, after making experiment or trial of the different sects among his nation, he embraced that of the Pharisees, in the nineteenth year of his age. Now, these observations being laid together, it seems clear, it was not his intention to represent that the Pharisees, who maintained the immortality of souls in general, taught the transmigration of virtuous souls, or their passing from body to body in continual train. For, according to his professed account of their creed, compared with his explication of the lawgiver's doctrine, and of his own sentiments in his address to the companions of his concealment, good souls were happy after death, in a state of separation from body, instead of being appointed immediately to actuate other bodies on earth one after another, and after the revolution of ages, they were born again, they entered another body, and they then lived a still more excellent and blessed life. There is then no sufficient reason, from Josephus's representation of the principles of the Pharisees, more than from the places of Scripture and Apocrypha above produced, to say that the Pharisees believed a metempsychosis or transmigration, and not a resur-

thren through Phrygia and Asia, ' The enemies burnt the bodies of
 ' the martyrs, and threw their ashes into the Rhone, as able to over-
 ' come God, and to take away from them a resurrection, καὶ ἀφί-
 ' λωσαι αὐτῶν τὴν παλιγγενεσίαν.' Nor are other instances of such
 acceptance of the phrase wanting, Epiphan. Haer. 37. 1. &c.

* Vita, sect. 2.

rection: nor, by consequence, to insinuate, that Paul advanced a falshood to gain friends, when he said, I am a Pharisee, viz. by the hope of a resurrection of the dead; and that Luke gave a wrong account of their opinions, in writing they confessed a resurrection.

It is true, he does not say, these bodies, which virtuous souls will at a future distant season inhabit, shall be their old ones, in reference to their materials redeemed from the grave, and fitted up again into a mansion for them in that happier life which shall then commence; nor even that they shall be immortal bodies, in express words. And, perhaps, he chose to be on the reserve, both because there was some variety of sentiments among the persons who followed this sect upon that point, as we may learn from Philo's writings, and because there was no small danger of scorn and ridicule from the Greeks * and Romans against the Jews, by an explicit mention of their faith in the resurrection of the dead. But, though for these reasons he may have spoken more generally, and accommodated more his phraseology to that which heathen people and philosophers employed, he hath said nothing † which will authorise us to say they did not hold the resurrection, especially

* The resurrection of the dead, was an article peculiarly offensive to them. See Acts xvii. 32. Pliny ranks it among impossibilities, in respect of the power of God. Nat. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 7. 'Nec potest Deus revocare defunctos.' Confer. Ibid. lib. 7. cap. 55. Et Minut. Felix. page 10.

† Such appears to me a just representation of Josephus's sense, though Grotius and others have supposed him to say, the Pharisees believed a resurrection.

after so credible an author as Luke hath affirmed they confessed it. Moreover, we have other positive evidence that the Jews, in a former age, though still so late as to leave little room to doubt that the sect of the Pharisees was then known, believed a resurrection of the dead. For in the second book of Maccabees we read, that the second of the seven brothers, when through torment, because he would not eat swines flesh against the law of God, he was at the last gasp, said to the king, (Antiochus) ‘Thou, like a fury, takest us out of this present life, but the king of the world shall raise us up, who have died for his laws, unto everlasting life*.’ After him was the third made a mocking stock. ‘And when he was required, he put forth his tongue, and that right soon, holding forth his hands manfully, and said courageously, These I had from heaven, and for his laws I despise them, and from him I hope to receive them again†.’ The fourth, when he was ready to die, said thus, ‘It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up‡ again by him. As for thee, (the king) thou shalt have no resurrection unto life.’ And the mother exhorted every one of them,—‘Doubtless the Creator of the world—will also, of his own mercy, give you breath and life§ again.’ In particular, she encouraged her youngest son, instead of dissuading him, as the king exhorted her, and afterward told the king ‘they were

* Chap. vii. 9. Αποθαινοντας ἡμας—εις αἰώνιον ἀναβίωσιν ζωῆς ἡμας ἀναστήσει.

† Ibid. 10. 11. Ταῦτα---παλιν κομιζέσθαι.

‡ Παλιν ἀναστήσεται ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ---ἀναστήσας εἰς ζωὴν.

§ Ibid. v. 23. Τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν ζωὴν ἀποδώσει ὑμῖν πάλιν.

‘all dead, under God’s covenant of†everlasting life.’ Again, in the twelfth chapter of the same book we read that Judas caused offer a sin-offering in Jerusalem for some, whom he supposed slain for the violation of the law, ‘Doing therein very well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection, for if he had not hoped, that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the*dead.’ At the same time it may be observed, that Josephus (which confirms our account for his more cautious manner of expressing himself on the subject,) when he relates the fortitude and constancy of the same persons in suffering, in his treatise concerning the Maccabees, or, the government of reason, if that piece be in reality his, is far more sparing in his representation of their faith. For, though he makes them all say, ‘they would receive the reward of virtue, and be with God, for whom they suffered, while Antiochus would endure eternal torment from divine justice, and that when they were dead, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, would receive them into their bosoms, and all the fathers would praise them;’ and though he describes one of them, to speak of the glorious life of the pious, whereas another of them told the king, divine justice reserved him to more vehement and eternal fire, which would not leave him for ever; and though he himself says, that the mother preferred piety, which would save to eternal life, to

† Ibid. ver. 24, 36.—*Διὸν ζῶνς ὑπο διαθήκην Θεοῦ πεπτωκασιν.*

* Ver. 43. 44.—*ὑπὲρ ἀναστάσεως διαλογίζομενος. Εἰ γὰρ μὴ τῆς προπεπτωκότας ἀναστῆναι προεδοχά, &c.*

the temporary deliverance of her sons; and affirms, that they for their patience now stand by the divine throne, and lead a blessed life; that these sons of Abraham, with their victorious mother, are gathered together into the chorus of the fathers, having received pure and immortal souls from God†; he never uses the terms which directly signify a resurrection so much as once, as often as they are found in the second book of Maccabees. Now, these sufferings are placed 168 years before Christ, when there is ground to think the Pharisees existed, at least, that many entertained their opinions, as may be seen in ‡ the note.

† De Maccabeis, &c. sect. 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20.

‡ Mr. Voltaire gives much too late a date to the rise of the sect of the Pharisees among the Jews, into whose notions about a resurrection we have been inquiring, when he says, *Phil. Dictionary*, p. 324. ‘According to St. Jerome, the sect of the Pharisees began but a very little time before Jesus Christ. Rabbi Hillel is accounted its founder, and he was cotemporary with Gamaliel, St. Paul’s master.’ And when he says, *Phil. of Hist.* chap. 11. p. 52. ‘They (the Persians) were without contradiction the first who framed these ideas of a God, (he means, a devil, a resurrection, a paradise, and hell;) this was the most antient system, and which was not adopted by other nations till after many ages; since the Pharisees among the Jews, did not strongly maintain the immortality of the soul, and the dogma of rewards and punishments after death, till about the time of Herod.’ For, without examining, whether his representation of Jerome’s sentiments here be just or not, and whether his assertion, that the Persians first of all men entertained ideas about these objects he enumerates, be well or ill-founded, it is plain he is in a gross mistake about the first appearance of the Pharisees among the Jews. It may not be easy indeed to ascertain the exact era when they sprung up, as sects are often gradually formed; however, they were known long before the time he fixes for their rise; they were so powerful about eighty years before Christ, that a sense of their hatred to king Alexander Jannæus made his queen

The Jewish Pharisees then, at least a number of them,

express great anxiety about herself and her children, when he was upon his death-bed, whereupon he advised her by every method to care for them, since that would secure to her the bulk of the nation, they being altogether revered and believed by the common people: the advantage of which counsel she afterwards reaped, in the establishment of the power of the family; Joseph. Antiq. 15. 5. and 16. 1. Nay, as they had been, by evil slanders and surmises, causes of open affronts and insurrections to king Jannæus himself, during his possession of the crown, so they were so considerable, in the time of John Hyrcanus, prince and high-priest of the Jews, who died in the year 107 before the Christian era, that, we are told, he endeavoured to win them to his interest, by cajoling them, and inviting the heads among them to an entertainment, 'for they had such influence with the multitude, that 'they immediately believed whatever they said against the king and 'high-priest.' Ibid. 13. 10. 5. 6. Indeed, Josephus having spoken of the battle of Jonathan with Demetrius's generals, and his victory over them, which is placed 144 years before Christ, (Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. 10. p. 320.) introduces the mention of them thus, 'About 'this time there were three sects among the Jews, the Pharisees, the 'Sadducees, and the Essenes; *κατὰ δὲ τὸν χρόνον τούτον, &c.*' Ibid. 13. 5. 9. and refers to his more accurate account of them, in the second book of the Jewish War. He also, on occasion of the disturbances that were raised by Judas the Gaulonite, about the *census* or valuation of the estates of the Jews, that there might be levied from them a tax proportionable to every man's substance, which happened after the banishment of Archelaus, represents the sect of the Pharisees as one of the three philosophical sects, which had been among his countrymen from ancient time, *ἐκ τῶ παλαιῶ ἀρχαίων*. Ibid. 18. 1. 2. and elsewhere he affirms, that the Pharisees introduced the first sect, *τῶ πρώτῃ παλαιῶν αἰσίων*. De Bello, 2. 8. 13. The Pharisees then must have been a sect long prior to Hillel, if by Hillel be meant the Pollio of Josephus, as is thought most reasonable, who is supposed to have flourished only 27 years before Christ. Indeed if they were not more ancient than the sect of the Sadducees, which the last quoted words of Josephus seem to imply, (as much as many learned men have overlooked them, while they make their rise later than that of the

held a † resurrection, as indeed none but those of this sect housed souls in bodies after death. I do not however mean, that they held it exactly according to our ideas. That they did not extend it to the wicked, but confine it to the righteous, Josephus is clear; for he says they affirmed ‘the souls of wicked men were shut up in an eternal ‡ prison,’ and ‘that they were subjected to eternal punishment under the earth, but that the soul of good men only passed into another* body.’ Nor, indeed, do Paul’s words here require we should suppose he had the resurrection of the former in his eye, which was not, strictly, an object of hope. They supposed also in part, if not all, as would seem, that the resurrection of good men would be a resurrection to a capacity and enjoyment of such animal pleasures as we here partake, if we may judge from the cavil of the Sadducees which puzzled § them, Matt. xxii. 23, 31. Persons of this sect therefore interposed, says Luké, in Paul’s vindication, upon his professing himself at-

Sadducees, upon a very uncertain and precarious argument,) they must have been coeval with this sect. Now, this sect received its denomination from Sadoc, who was scholar to Antigonus of Socho, a person who flourished almost 300 years before the birth of our Saviour. The learned Reland says, there is mention of the Pharisees in Jewish writings, from the time of Simeon Ben Shetah, who, with Jehudah Ben Tabbai, makes the fourth link in the chain of their Mechanical doctors, while Hillel appears only as one of the sixth link. Antiq. part 2. cap. 9. sect. 13. Now this Simeon made a figure in Hyrcanus’s time.

† See Reland Antiq. Hebr. part 2. cap. 9. sect. 14.

‡ Antiq. 18. 1. 3.

* De Bello, 2. 8. 14 Compare 3. 7. 5.

§ Of the same gross notion, the exclamation from Luke, xiv. 15. may be thought some evidence, ‘Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.’

tached to their sentiments, in the article of the resurrection, from zeal for their own doctrine in opposition to that of the Sadducees, who denied all future existence, and said that souls perished with the body at death. And indeed it is credible they should have done so, upon the supposition themselves believed the resurrection, considering the fierceness of the two sects against one another, and their readiness to take opposite sides in a cause. Whereas it is otherwise altogether unaccountable how they should have expressed any favour towards him ; for who can think they would ever have espoused his cause, on his claiming an agreement in opinion with them, which was wholly without foundation, (as must have been the case, if they did not admit a resurrection at all,) or that Luke would have given them the credit of appearing in his interest, if there had been no ground for it?

SECTION XXVII.

Of his asserting in the same place, from 1 Theff. iv. that the first Christians made themselves sure they should see the end of the world ; and of his saying, that Luke actually foretells it as what should happen in his life-time.

IN the next † page of his Dictionary, he hath these reflections concerning St. Paul and St. Luke, ‘ St. Paul tells the inhabitants of Thessalonica, that the second coming of Jesus Christ is for them, and for him ; and that they shall be witnesses of it.’ After

† Page 325.

which, having cited his words 1 Theff. iv. 16, 17. he goes on, ‘ Does not this important passage evidently prove, that the first Christians made themselves sure, that they should see the end of the world? and St. Luke actually foretells it, as what should happen in his life-time.’

But though Paul say to the Christians at Thessalonica, to whose eminent faith, and charity, and patience, he beareth express testimony, that it was a righteous thing with God, to render unto them who endured persecutions and tribulations, for truth and duty’s sake, rest or refreshment with himself, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, his companions in the kingdom of God, when the Lord Jesus Christ should be revealed, 2 Theff. i. 6. (for to this passage I suppose our author alludes,) he never says that this final appearance of Jesus Christ is for his or their deliverance and consolation, exclusively of that of others of the same excellent temper and conduct; or that himself and they alone would be partakers of ease and joy by it: far less, that they would be sole witnesses and spectators of it.

As to Mr. Voltaire’s assertion again, that ‘ the passage 1 Theff. iv. 16, 17. evidently proves, that the first Christians made themselves sure that they should see the end of the world;’ there is no foundation for it, except that the apostle, while he speaks of their portion who are alive, and continue until that event, uses the first person plural, ‘ This we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent,’ anticipate in any advantage, them who are asleep, for the Lord himself shall

‘ descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice
 ‘ of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God.
 ‘ And the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then, or
 ‘ thereafter, we who are alive, and remain, shall be
 ‘ caught up together with them in the clouds, to
 ‘ meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever
 ‘ with the Lord.’ But how weak a foundation this, for
 the support of his charge! by the same kind of argu-
 ment, one may prove the opposite proposition, viz.
 that Paul believed that he and his fellow-labourers,
 together with the Christians at Corinth, should all
 die before that time, and be then raised out of their
 graves by the power and agency of the Lord Jesus; for
 says he to them, 2 Cor. iv. 14. ‘ We know that he who
 ‘ raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by
 ‘ Jesus, and shall present us together with you.’ And
 1 Cor. vi. 14. ‘ God hath both raised up the Lord,
 ‘ and will also raise up us by his own power.’—Yet,
 he could not believe two contradictory propositions
 at once. Farther, to infer from his words here, that
 he expected to be found alive at the day of judg-
 ment, is not only to put a sense on them, inconsis-
 tent with the declarations he makes, that he looked
 to die, and to be absent from the body, and to be
 sacrificed upon the service of mens faith, in his e-
 pistles to the Philippians, i. 23. to the Corinthians,
 2 ep. v. 6. and to Timothy, 2 ep. iv. 6. (for these,
 I am aware it may be remarked, were written after
 a considerable interval, in which he was cured of
 the mistake,) but is to give them a meaning, con-
 trary to his own explication of his sentiments up-
 on this subject, in his second letter to those Christi-
 ans of Thessalonica, though addressed to them only

some few months later than this first epistle, from which Voltaire labours to fix the erroneous principle and tenet upon him; yea, a meaning which he himself there disclaims as the genuine and true import of any expressions he had ever used, either in discourse or writing. For it is remarkable, he there guards them, not only against entertaining the imagination, that the day of Christ was just at hand, but against entertaining it, upon the pretence of any word which he was reported to have dropped, or any language which he had employed in any letter; which is certainly disavowing, in the clearest manner, his intention to suggest such a thought, either by speech or epistle before. Says he, 2 Thess. ii. 1. 2. ‘We beseech
 ‘you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 ‘and by our gathering together unto him, that ye
 ‘be not soon shaken in mind or troubled, neither by
 ‘spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as
 ‘that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man de-
 ‘ceive you by any means.’ And then he proceeds to acquaint them with the rise of a great apostacy in the Christian church, and with the appearance of a very corrupt and tyrannical power therein, before that day should come, the prevalence and destruction whereof is evidently spoken of as a work of time.

But how then, it may be said, can his manner of expression here be reconciled with his knowledge, that he should be dead before the day of judgment? I answer very easily by observing, that he uses the first person plural, because he considered Christians, through all ages, as one body or society, and knew some of them would be alive at Christ’s descent from heaven, though aware he himself would not be a-

mong that number, to whom what is here said would agree, and in whom it would be verified.— Nor is this any figure of speech but what is common in Scripture. The Psalmist having said, Ps. lxvi. 6. ‘ God turned the sea into dry land. They went ‘ through the flood on foot,’ adds, ‘ there did we ‘ rejoice in him ;’ though certainly neither he himself, nor any of his cotemporaries, had expressed joy on that miraculous passage; only their ancestors, from whom they were sprung by a long series of intermediate generations. And in the same manner, the author of the eighty-first psalm, having mentioned an ordinance or appointment of God, when he went out through the land of Egypt, subjoins, ‘ where I heard a language I understood not,’ when yet he was not in existence at the date of the fact referred to, nor indeed came into being for many ages after. Once more, the prophet Hosea uses the same latitude of speech, when he says, ‘ Jacob found ‘ God in Bethel, there he spake with us,’ chap. xi. 4. attributing thus a privilege and honour to himself, and those of that age, which was only enjoyed by their very remote progenitors. Now, as the sacred writers of the Old Testament, regarding the Jews, through all periods of their state, as one nation and community, ascribe to themselves, and those co-eval with them, passions, perceptions, and advantages, which, in strictness, only belonged to those of their nation, in times long previous and antecedent; in the same way, Paul regarding Christians, from the formation of the Christian church till the conclusion of this probationary scene, as one body, attributes to himself, and those of his day, things,

which in strictness, would only be the lot of those that should follow long after. Nor is there any violence in so interpreting the phraseology of the one, more than of the other.

Whereas he says, moreover, ‘ St. Luke certainly foretells it as what should happen in his life-time,’ viz. the end of the world, and the second coming of Christ, I do not well understand his meaning, unless it be admitted, that there is some inaccuracy of expression here, For St. Luke, so far as I recollect, hath not recorded any prediction by himself, either about this, or any other futurity; he hath only committed to writing some prophecies spoken by the Lord Jesus himself, and by some others of his followers. I suppose then our author intended to affirm, that Luke hath conveyed down to us some prophecy or prediction, in which Jesus, or a disciple of Jesus, foretold that the end of the world should come to pass, ere he himself died and was laid in his grave. Nevertheless, I cannot think he hath any more specious argument for this, or indeed any other handle at all for it, than some of our Saviour’s expressions which he hath recorded, in answer to the question which was put to him, ‘ When shall the temple be thrown down, and what sign will there be when this shall come to pass,’ Luke, xxi. (see Matt. xxiv. Mark. xiii.) But, these have been vindicated again and again from such misconstruction, and shewed to relate to the destruction of Jerusalem with its sanctuary, and the overthrow of the Jewish polity civil and religious, and the wide publication of the gospel by the apostles and other servants of Christ. Indeed, this would have been manifest, beyond all possibility of

mistake by any, had they attended in what lofty and bold figures the entire ruin and subversion of states and kingdoms is foretold by the Jewish prophets, such as, the sun's being darkened, and the luminaries of heaven ceasing to give their light, &c. Compare I-saiah, xxiii. 10. xxxiv. 4. 10. Ezek. xxxii. 7. 8. Amos, viii. 9. &c. Had they observed farther, that the original word turned *earth* occurs frequently, not for the terraqueous globe, but for a particular country, or region in it, as Gen. xiii. 9. 1 Sam. xiii. 3. Jerem. iv. 20. viii. 16. Luke, iv. 26. to which I hesitate not to add, in all probability, Matt. xxvii. 45. with the parallel places in the gospels of Mark and Luke, though many have concluded thence, that the darkness at Christ's passion was spread over our hemisphere, and appealed to the* fabulous legendary tale of Dionysius's exclamation in Egypt in proof of it.—And, finally, had they considered, that the Greek term translated in our Bibles there *angels*, signifies no more than *messengers*, and accordingly is the name, by which the preachers of the gospel are sometimes called, 2 Cor. viii. 23. Revel. ii. 1. &c. It is even amazing, that any Christian commentators should ever have maintained another sense, who did not suppose that Jesus himself (concerning whom far be the thought from us!) was himself under the influence of a spirit of error and delusion about the speedy end of the world, since he hath added, by way

* I call it so without any scruple; such is my judgment of it, upon an examination of the evidence, into which I was led by seeing my late learned and candid friend Dr Lardner, in his Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, reject it so peremptorily, without entering into a detail of his reasons for it.

of caveat against such interpretation, this declaration, ‘ That this generation shall not pass away, ‘ till all these things, which he had before spoken ‘ of, be fulfilled;’ for the only natural sense here is, that that race of men, which was then upon the earth, should not be swept away from it by death, till all these things which he had predicted had come to pass. To explain it to signify, that the Jewish nation should continue a distinct people through all ages, instead of being blended with, and lost in other nations, like the Assyrians, Greeks, and other people famous of old, though it may be to build on them a proposition true in itself, is to offer force and violence to the term *generation*, which according to its uniform acceptation, denotes what we call, a race of men, who come into the world and die out of it within a certain period, nor this of very great extent.

There is therefore no sufficient reason for this imputation, which Mr. Voltaire throws upon Paul and Luke, that they foretold the end of the world would be in their time; nor, by consequence, for alleging, as some have done, that they allured persons to Christianity, by the false and deceitful hope of being taken up alive without tasting death, to the glories and felicities of heaven, like Enoch and Elijah, and that they engaged them to suffer chearfully the loss of worldly goods, and sacrifice their earthly substance for its sake, by possessing them with the vain conceit, that, in the revolution of a few years, all these things would perish in an universal conflagration, and be irrecoverably lost.

SECTION XXVIII.

Of his saying, in the Ignorant Philosopher, that Christ's words, Matth. xviii 17. were the cause of all persecutions among Christians.

I SHALL only take notice of another misrepresentation of the sense of Scripture; and it is in his Ignorant * Philosopher. But it is not the passage where he asserts, 'That the Holy Scripture,' where it introduces God saying, "He will require the blood of mens lives at the hand of every beast," 'manifestly supposes in beasts a knowledge of, and acquaintance with good and evil.' For I think I may safely leave his conclusion to be judged of by every man's own unassisted sagacity. The passage I would examine, is in the article entitled, 'The Effects of the Spirit of Party and Fanaticism.' After observing, there is room for mutual reproaches among Papists and Protestants, on account of religious cruelties, he goes on† thus, 'Compare sects, compare times, you will every where find for one thousand six hundred years, nearly an equal proportion of absurdity and horror every where amongst a race of blind men, who are destroying each other in the obscurity which surrounds them. What book of controversy is there written without gall? And what theological dogma has not been the cause of spilling blood?' and then adds, 'This was the necessary effect of these sensible words 'Whomsoever listens not to the church, shall be looked upon as a Pa-

* Article, Of Beasts, p. 18. Glasg. edit. p. 145. † Page 145.

“gan, and a publican.’ Each party pretended to be
 ‘the church, each party has therefore constantly
 ‘said, We abhor the officers of the customs, we are
 ‘enjoined to treat whoever differs from us in opini-
 ‘ons, as the smugglers treat the officers of the cus-
 ‘toms when they have the superiority. Thus, the
 ‘first dogma every where established was hatred.’

Here, every one sees, he pronounces the persecutions, which the different sects and parties of Christians have carried on against one another, even to the destruction of life, the effect of Jesus’s words, Matt. xviii. 17. and not the casual or accidental effect of them, through their abuse by the passions, and their perversion by the weakness and folly of men, but the necessary effect of them.—By consequence, he places them all to the charge of our Saviour himself, as the author and adviser thereof.

But what can be more injurious than such a reflection founded on this text? Indeed, I am not able to recollect, that it hath ever been pleaded by any of the patrons and advocates of severities for difference of opinion, as much as they have tortured and wrested some passages of the New Testament to justify the same.

They have argued from Christ’s command to Peter to feed his sheep, that this must convey a power to his successors to kill heretics, since shepherds have a power to kill wolves, and other beasts of prey, which seek to devour their flocks; thus building a doctrine, which we shall see to be most opposite to Scripture, as well as to reason, on a figurative expression. They have urged the order, which Christ in his parable represents the lord, who made a great supper,

but whose invitation to partake of it had been slighted by great multitudes, to have given to his servants when he sent them into the highways and hedges; 'Compell them to come in, that my house may be filled.' As if our Saviour had meant, they were to employ force and violence for procuring a sufficient number of guests; when the occasion shews, as well as the application of the word translated *compel* elsewhere, that only persuasion, importunity, solicitation, and such methods could be intended.— Henry Stephen even intimates, in his preparatory treatise* to his apology for Herodotus, that some of the Papists, who have been the uniform and avowed friends of persecution for conscience sake, had recourse to the expression in the Vulgate version, 'Haereticum devita,' Titus, iii. 10. and contended, although it signifies in truth only, 'shun or avoid an heretic,' that it was an injunction to hurry him out of† life. But amidst all the strange pretences that have

* This is a book, which hath undergone more than twelve editions. It was written by him, on occasion of the artifices used by the monks to deprectate Herodotus as a historian, who abounded in incredible stories, after he had printed that book at great charge; and its intention was, to expose them for imposing on the world tales equally or more improbable, for their stupid ignorance, and gross vices.

† As Henry Stephen hath been blamed for exceeding the truth, in his representations of the Papists, it may not be improper to observe, that Schoelhorne, in a book whose title in the German tongue signifies, *Amoenitates Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, or, Pleasantries of Church History, hath given us a letter written by Ferdinand king of Arragon in 1415. to Sigismund, the emperor of Germany, which was never before printed, wherein he exhorts him to put to death John Hus, maintains that no faith was to be kept to heretics, and shews it was necessary to destroy their lives, by these words of St. Paul, 'Haereticum

been used for spilling mens blood, on account of a disagreement in sentiment, never till now I believe was this text insisted on; which yet our author makes the cause of the religious wars, massacres, and executions which have happened among Christians. It was reserved to himself to make this discovery, and to find the dogma of deadly hatred between the several parties that should arise in the Christian church established here. But I hope it will appear very soon, that he has no reason to triumph in his interpretation.

As persecution for conscience sake is a thing most unjust in its own nature, because a violation of the great rule of equity, to do as we would be done to, and most pernicious in its tendency, because it serves to make men assume a hypocritical shew of that faith which they have not, instead of producing a change of judgment in favour of principles which they before rejected; so it is most repugnant to the

‘hominem post unam et secundam correptionem *devita*,’ for he imagined that *devita* was ‘*De vita* tolle, Take out of life;’ See Bibl. des Sciences, tom. 19. page 117. Erasmus moreover informs us, that the same fine interpretation was put on it by an old and grave divine in the council of Constance, who urged it to prove, that by canonical Scripture an heretic was to be capitally punished; as he had it from Coletus, a man of known integrity, who presided when the thing happened. The passage being curious, I give it in his own words, Eras. Annotat. in N. Testam. ad Titum, iii. 10. ‘Hic locus est, quem senex quidam theologus et imprimis severus in concilio produxit, cum venisset in quaestionem, num quis esset locus in literis canonicis qui juberet haereticum affici supplicio capitis, *Devita, devita*, inquit, putans *devita* Latinis esse *de vita* tollere. Id ne quis suspicetur meum esse commentum, accepi ex Joanne Coeto, viro spectatae integritatis, quo praesidente res acta est. Eamus nunc et negemus periculosum esse errare in verbis.’

precepts of Jesus and his apostles. When two of his apostles asked leave from him to command fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who had expressed their displeasure against them for their different belief, by refusing to supply them with provisions in their way to Jerusalem, how did he rebuke them sharply, saying, ‘Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them?’ Luke ix. 53—56. Yet certainly such a miraculous descent of fire from heaven must have contributed much more to make all those proselytes to their place of solemn worship that should be spectators of this punishment, or hear its fame, than any killing by the sword, or like human instrument of death. And how does he exhort to love and bless, to pray for, and do kind offices to all men, without exception, urging it at the same time, by the example of God’s extensive goodness and beneficence, Matth. v. 44—48? In the same manner his apostles teach, ‘That the servant of the Lord ought not to strive, but to be patient toward all men, in meekness instructing such as oppose themselves, if God peradventure will grant them repentance.’ 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. ‘That the strong ought to bear with the weak.’ Rom. xv. 1. Why, however, do I dwell on particular precepts? It is even inconsistent with the whole genius and spirit of the gospel, which was intended to enlighten mens minds in the knowledge of truth, to bring them to a chosen and voluntary obedience of it, and to unite them by these ties in the bonds of reciprocal kindness and charity. It were very strange then if in this passage there was a direction to apply all

the terrors of the loss of life, or, indeed, of any corporal chastisement, to bring men to soundness in faith.

These circumstances afford the strongest presumptive evidence that a rule of this nature is not contained here, even before we examine it more closely. But when we proceed to consider the occasion and import of the words themselves, we are satisfied of it beyond all suspense and hesitation. For it is plain our Lord is not here speaking of errors in speculation, or mistakes in opinion, but of injuries between man and man as to substance, or reputation, and good name, or some similar interest. ‘If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone,’ expostulate with him in the most private manner about it: ‘if he shall hear thee,’ yield to thy remonstrance and admonition, by undoing of what hath been amiss, or repairing the injury he hath committed, as far as he can, ‘thou hast gained thy brother,’ recovered him to his duty, restored him to be thy friend, re-established harmony and peace between you, and prevented his continuing under the divine displeasure by perseverance in the wrong. ‘But if he will not hear thee, take with thee two or three more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established,’ that there may appear sufficient vouchers for thy friendly application to him, and thy fair representation of the injustice he hath done, and that the same may have greater weight and influence through their concurrence in it. ‘But if he shall neglect to hear them,’ or be still refractory, notwithstanding their advice, instead of altering his be-

haviour, and making good, as far as in his power, the thing wherein he hath trespassed against thee, 'tell it unto the church,' † to the assembly or convention; say some a civil convention or assembly, alluding to that which the Jews are declared by some to have had in their synagogues for arbitration of controversies and disputes; say others an ecclesiastic assembly, the society of worshipping Christians, with which the offender has communion and fellowship. 'And if he neglect to hear the church,' the assembly whether of the one or the other kind, omit to comply with their pleasure and direction, and will not be brought to reason and justice by all these methods, 'let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publi-

† It is certain the word *εκκλησια*, here rendered *church*, signifies any number of men called or gathered together, whether upon secular, or sacred occasions. It is used of a civil assembly in the New Testament itself, Acts xix. 32, 39, 40. and in this sense some have interpreted it here. Mr. Bourn, in his Sermon on the Parable of the generous Monarch, or the Duty of Forgiveness, makes it some court of arbitration, which was in the Jewish synagogue, without a compulsive authority of law. Bp. Stillingfleet, in his *Irenicum*, expounds it to signify a private meeting of select friends, book 2. chap. 5. as Selden had done before him, de Synedriis, lib. 1. cap. 9. But, as it is taken commonly in Scripture for an assembly on account of religious purposes, others think it here denotes the congregation, or meeting of Christians to which he belongs, whose duty it is to censure him in proportion to his fault. Basnage, however, in his *History of the Jews*, page 465. understands, not the church, in a judicial capacity, or as having a tribunal erected to take cognizance of faults, and to punish them; but as an assembly of serious Christians, to whom the name and trespass of the offender was to be published, for his shame and disgrace, for 'It was customary among the Jews,' says he, 'to deal so with faulty persons in their synagogues, I mean to proclaim their behaviour four sabbath days.'

can.' Who now can have any doubt that our Saviour is treating here of offences against neighbours, and not of heresy or heterodoxy of sentiment? and that he intends not a brother's having any difference with a man about truth, but a brother's violating some of those rights which belong to him, whether in property, or liberty, or character, or the like? And as to the manner of behaving which he prescribes, or allows toward the injurious party who is obstinate and unreclaimable, that the injured person should treat him as a heathen man†, or a publican, it can never be reasonably explained to signify that he should put him to death, or kill him. For how absurd to make Christ give an injunction, or even a permission to put a period to the life of another, whenever he is incorrigible in his fault, or continues not convinced of having done wrong, and by consequence, not disposed to make reparation for it, be the fault ever so slight, the wrong ever so inconsiderable? especially, after his own lessons of patience under small violations of property, and honour, and freedom, Matt. v. 38—41. Besides, when was it ever heard, by what antient writer is it at all recorded, that the Jews were accustomed, whenever they were equal to the work, and favoured with an opportunity for

† Mr. Voltaire cites the text, 'as a pagan man;' but the expression 'an heathen or gentile man,' must be much more fit and proper. For the name of *pagan* was not given to the worshippers of idols till Christianity prevailed, when they who continued attached to false gods, were chiefly such as dwelt in the country, or inhabited the villages instead of the cities: these, as might be expected, being more tenacious of the prejudices of education. See Libanius's Orat. pro Templis, and Ant. Univ. Hist. 16. 385.

it, to dispatch a heathen or a publican? which, it seems, is the manner of the smugglers dealing with the officers of the customs in Mr. Voltaire's country.

What then is the rational and likely meaning of the words of our Saviour, 'Let a brother who is deaf to
' rebuke in all these methods, be to thee as a heathen
' man, or a publican?' It appears to be this; that he whom he had injured, should consider him as unworthy of all tenderer affection, and more intimate society, and carry at a greater distance from him, as the Jews did to heathens or publicans. We are sure the Jews despised the heathens, giving them at the same time names expressive of this contempt, and declined familiarity with them, 'Ye know,' says Peter to Cornelius and his friends, Acts, x. 28. 'how
' that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew,
' to keep company, or come unto one of another
' nation;' an evidence it was criminal, according to their established maxims and usage in that period, for Jews to converse with Gentiles in near and close society by eating with them, entering into their houses, and the like, as the word properly signifies. For, indeed, the observation is not to be extended to all dealing and intercourse with them. This, as many of them resided in, or travelled through heathen cities, was in some degree unavoidable. The same way they seem to have been affected toward the Samaritans; though they scrupled not to buy provisions from them, more than their fathers did from the Tyrians in Nehemiah's time, Nehem, xiii. 16. yet they had no dealings with them as friends, insomuch that they would not ask or receive the small courtesy of a draught of water, John, iv. 9. We are likewise cer-

tain, that the Jews had a great aversion to the publicans, i. e. those that were employed to collect taxes and duties among them for the Romans, who were now their masters; There had been a great rebellion raised among them by Judas the Gaulonite, on occasion of the reduction of Judea into the state of a Roman province, and the enrolment of their estates by Cyrenius, after Archelaus was deposed by Augustus, and banished into Gaul, upon pretence they had no sovereign or king but God, and were not bound to pay tribute to any stranger, because it was said, ‘ One
 ‘ from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over
 ‘ thee: thou mayst not set a stranger over thee, who is
 ‘ not thy brother,’ Deut. xvii. 15. And there was undeniably still too much of this leaven or evil principle among them. Hence it is natural to conclude, the payment of taxes to the Romans would be to them a heavy grievance, and the collectors of them would be to them very disagreeable, as the tools and instruments of illegal and iniquitous oppression. Moreover, it appears to have been very common with men who possessed the office of tax-gatherers, to be guilty of rapine and undue exactions, that they might make it more lucrative and profitable to themselves; on which account, when some persons, who followed this employment, came to be baptized by John, and asked what they should do to be saved, he cautioned them particularly against the vice of extortion, ‘ Exact no more than that which is ap-
 ‘ pointed you,’ Luke, iii. 12. And this must have increased the abhorrence of them by the Jewish people, as indeed their too frequent * custom of oppression,

* That publicans were in ancient times very much addicted to op-

in levying the revenue, raised hatred at them through other provinces. Further, they may be thought, at least among the Jews, to have been generally persons of a loose character, and irregular conduct, who indulged their appetites beyond all bounds of order and decency, since we find them usually reckoned with harlots and sinners, i. e. enormous offenders, in the New Testament, which must have alienated the hearts of all the strict and religious part of the nation from them still more, and have raised their dislike of them to a yet higher pitch. Accordingly, we find the Jews took exception at Jesus's eating with them, as all their country-men who made a more religious profession, disdained and scorned such free and friendly intercourse with them, Mat. ix. 11. Luke xv. 2. xix. 7. &c. and Dr. Lightfoot † hath quoted this as a maxim among their Rabbis, 'That a religi-

profession, in the exercise of their office, cannot be denied. Theocritus, according to Hammond on Matt. ix. 10. says, 'that among the beasts of the wilderness, bears and lions are the most cruel, and among the beasts of the city, the publican and parasite.' Other testimonies of the same thing may be seen in Grotius on Luke, iii. 10. I speak not, however, of the head-farmers, or those who rented the levying of the taxes through a large district; for if we believe Cicero, they were men of good morals, as well as of equestrian rank, that is, of the order of knighthood, Orat. pro Plancio, sect. 9. and Epist. Famil. lib 13. sect 10; but of the common receivers and gatherers of the taxes. That they were also generally odious and unpopular, is evident from Cicero against Verres, lib. 2. cap. 3. n. 7. where speaking of the inhabitants of Sicily, he says, 'Sic porro homines nostros diligunt, ut his solis neque publicanus, neque negotiator, odio sit. They are so attached to us, that to them alone, neither a publican nor a factor is odious.'

† Har. Hebr. on Matt. xviii. 17. Works, vol. 2. p. 215.

‘ous man who becomes a publican, is to be driven
‘out of the society of religion.’

On these accounts, an advice, (or permission, as some reckon it,) to treat an offender, who would not be persuaded by all gentle methods, to acknowledge his injury, and make reasonable satisfaction for it, as an heathen man or a publican, was very proper, to signify, that such a person should be disapproved and avoided, instead of being admitted to friendship and intimacy; for this was the temper and deportment of the Jews toward Gentile idolaters, and also toward publicans, though † of their own nation; but it could

† It seems to be implied here by Christ’s mode of expression, that all publicans were not heathens.—Tertullian, as many after him have done, thought that no Jew was a publican, *De Pudicitia*, page 561. chap. 9. ‘Si quis dubitat ethnicos esse publicanos apud Judæam, u-
‘surpatam jam pridem Pompeii manu atque Luculli, legat Deuteronomi-
‘um, non erit vestigial pendens ex filiis Israel. Nec tam execrabile esset
‘nomen publicanorum apud Dominum, nisi extraneum, &c.’ But his argument for this opinion was ill-founded. For, (besides that a prohibition, was it to be found, would be no proof that all declined the employment, since too many things forbidden in their law were practised by them,) there are no words in the original, Deut. xxiii. 17. answering to these which he quotes from the book of Deuteronomy, ‘There shall be no tax-gatherer of the children of Israel.’ Nor indeed in the Chaldee paraphrases, either that of Onkelos, or that ascribed to Jonathan Ben Uzziel, nor in the Syriac and Vulgate translations. There are only some words in the Septuagint version after ‘There shall not be a whoremonger (a sodomite, we say,) of the children of Israel,’ which seem to come near them, Οὐκ ἔσται τελεσφορος ἀπο θυγατέρων Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ οὐκ ἔσται τελεσκομιμος ἀπο υἱων Ἰσραὴλ. Here however τελεσφορος, which commonly signifies a publican or tax-gatherer, denotes a person who prostitutes herself for hire, as many women did in honour of Venus, *initia ferens*, as τελεσκομιμος is *initiatas*; and the whole clause seems to have been at first a marginal comment on the pre-

signify, that it was incumbent on; or lawful to him who suffered the wrong, to send the doer of it, though unreclaimed, out of the world by some method of violence.*

ceding words, afterwards adopted by some transcribers into the text; suitably, the copies vary in exhibiting it. Compare Casaubon. Exercitationes, 13. 36. and Le Clerc in Deuteronomium. That Jews were publicans, appears from the New Testament itself: for Zaccheus and Matthew, otherwise called Levi, as their names shew, were of the Jewish nation. Josephus is also supposed to mention John the publican, as a Jew of influence and figure, De Bello, 2. 14. 45. and perhaps rightly. He indeed says, 'The powerful among the Jews, together with whom was John the publican, persuade Florus to a certain measure by eight talents of silver, *οἱ δυνατοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, συν ὧς ὁ τελαωνὴς Ἰωάννης, πείθουσι τὸν Φλωρον ἀργυρίῳ ταλαίτοις οκτώ;*' which manner of speaking appears to me consistent enough with his being a heathen. But when I consider he expresses himself afterwards, as if the favour was sold to Jews only; and as if they were all Jews, who, upon ill-usage by the people of Caesarea, complained to Florus, putting him in mind of the eight talents, while he again ordered them to be arrested and bound, blaming them for the removal of their code of laws out of Caesarea; it seems most probable this John was also a Jew, *οἱ δὲ περὶ τοῦ Ἰωάννου δυνατοὶ δώδεκα πρὸς Φλωρον ἐλθοῦντες... ἀπωδύροντο περὶ τῶν πιπραγμένων, &c.*

* Though Mr. Bourn. in his Sermon above quoted, paraphrases these words, 'Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican,' 'Have no further acquaintance with him, consider him as unworthy of your regard;' he supposes they also authorized him to carry his cause before a Roman magistrate, as the Jews held it lawful to prosecute a heathen or a publican in the Roman courts, however many of them scrupled prosecuting a brother Jew there. And the same explication had been given by Erasmus and Dodwell, p. 261. De Jure Laicorum. But what evidence is there, that the Jews scrupled to prosecute their brethren in the Roman courts; where they had received injuries from them, of which such courts only could take cognizance? and how few injuries comparatively would it be needful to trouble the Roman

The persecutions, therefore, of the different sects and parties of Christians against one another, could never be the necessary effect of these words of Jesus; nor indeed were they in any sense the effect of them at all, because we do not find they ever concluded thence, that it was lawful to kill every person who trespassed against them, in the manner Mr. Voltaire represents. Even Mr. Chubb could not see here the church's power of excommunication. For, having contended, that Christ hath given no power to pastors to excommunicate wicked Christians, or those who appear such, but rather expressly forbid it, lest they should root up good grain with tares, or through ignorance, mistake, interest, and passion, hurt truly faithful and pious persons, he explains these * words under

courts with ! since the Jews, both in the country of Judea, and in these provinces of the empire where they lived, had councils and magistrates of their own, vested with sufficient power and authority to chastise such wrongs as did not merit capital punishment, by the lesser penalties of imprisoning, scourging, &c.---Moreover, Christ could only in agreeableness to his rules Matt. v. 38---41. give advice or permission to prosecute in civil courts such as had committed more intolerable injuries. Accordingly, Mr. Bourn himself, finds it necessary to throw in a limitation or qualification, about the importance of injuries ; ‘ If
 ‘ the injury be such, that it appear requisite to your own safety, or the
 ‘ ends of public justice, to make an example of him, or reduce him to
 ‘ reason by compulsion, religion by no means forbids you from secur-
 ‘ ing yourselves, or executing justice upon him, by carrying your cause
 ‘ before the Roman magistrate.’ And how necessary such a limitation, when seeking redress of wrongs sustained from Christian brethren before heathen judges, was ready to give them ill impressions of Christianity, and to create prejudices in their minds against religion, thereby hurting its cause and interest ! See 1 Cor. vi. 1.---8.

* See his two Letters, the first of which contains an inquiry concerning church-discipline. But that the church is required to ex-

our consideration, thus, 'If any one does not behave suitably to the principles of Christianity, (by whatever name his fault may be called,) and, after being admonished at different times by his neighbour, and at last by the church, i. e. the Christian society of which he is a member, does not amend or reform, he ought to be no more regarded as a member of that society, but as a wicked man.' And then adds, 'This is all the excommunication which Jesus Christ hath authorized. Every individual ought to avoid intercourse with the man who continues in his vices; but the Christian society hath no right to exclude him from its body, by a formal and judicial act.' How strange therefore our author should have discovered here a precept of Christ to his followers, to destroy the lives of all who differed in opinion from them, though they should also own Jesus as their master, and his gospel as the rule of their faith and manners! This hath been left to be found out by his sagacity and penetration alone. Christ's words, however, continue still a very sensible and wholesome prescription in the case of injuries between man and man, after all his attempt to burlesque and ridicule them.

But it is time to finish the second Part of this Treatise. A sufficient number * of instances hath, I

exclude from communion all visibly wicked and flagitious members, is evident from the apostle's reproofs and orders, with relation to the incestuous Christian, to the church of Corinth, 1 Cor. v. throughout, and 2 Cor. ii. 1—11. and in reality, it is only exercising such power as is fit, for its own credit and honour, and for promoting regularity of manners among its members.

* If other misrepresentations of Scripture are remarked in his works, it is to be observed, I only proposed to animadvert on *some* of them,

I think, been produced to verify the charge against Mr. Voltaire, of misrepresenting Scripture sometimes, upon the mere authority of the Vulgate translation, but far oftener without any shadow of support from that or any other version at all; and if the reader shall also be of opinion, that the accusation is made good, must it not follow, that he ought to be persecuted with suspicion and distrust, instead of implicit faith, where he professes to give an account of what is contained in the Sacred Books? nay, that he is deserving of our displeasure, whatever may be his fine talents and eminent abilities in some respects, because he discards that ingenuous probity, and strict regard to truth, which is the most essential of all qualifications in one, who professes to write with an intention to lead us into the knowledge of antient principles and facts? Must not also, by consequence, our veneration and esteem for the sacred oracles be restored and justified, in so far as his false recitals thereof, and false comments upon them, have tended to diminish and impair the same, or to expose it to the world as weak and injudicious?

as a specimen of his disregard to fairness and veracity. As to cavils against the truth of this or that particular fact, and the propriety of this or that law enjoined the Jews, and charges of contradiction in the narratives of the writers, which have any real foundation in the Sacred Books as they now stand, they did not fall within my plan in this work; I have hinted the principles, by one or other of which such objections may be in a great measure solved, in the note at the beginning of this second part, page 49. and answers to them may be met with, perhaps universally, in good commentators, or in apologies for Christianity against Tindal, Morgan, and others. Yet perhaps it would be no small service to the cause of religion, for some person of learning and leisure to consider them in the form in which Mr Voltaire hath proposed them.

PART III
OF
MR. VOLTAIRE'S
FALSE REFLECTIONS
ON SOME OF THE
SACRED BOOKS.

MR. VOLTAIRE hath not satisfied himself with giving unfair representations of particular passages of Scripture; He hath even thrown out injurious assertions, with regard to several of the books that compose our sacred volume. To the consideration, therefore, of some of them at least, in pursuance of the scheme proposed, I now proceed; and they chiefly relate to their genuineness or authenticity.

SECTION I.

Of his saying, that some thought the first book of Samuel a composition so late as the monarchy of the Greeks, in his Philosophy of History.

I BEGIN with his remark, in the thirty-fifth chapter of his * Philosophy of History, ' The Pythoness of Endor, says he, who raised the ghost of Samuel, is very well known. It is true there is something

* Page 165.

‘ strange, that the word *Python*, which is Greek,
 ‘ should be known to the Jews, in the time of Saul.
 ‘ Many learned men have concluded from hence,
 ‘ that this history was not written, till the Jews
 ‘ traded with the Greeks, after the time of Alexan-
 ‘ der. But this is not the point in question here.’

Very fine! I wish he had favoured us with a list of his many learned men, who have judged that book of so recent a date, upon the reason he mentions. For my part, I do not remember to have heard or read of one; and I should be much surprised, if any who merited the character, ever entertained the most slight suspicion of this kind, on that account. For how does the case stand? The woman whom Saul wished to consult about the event of his approaching battle with the army of the Philistines, is denominated once and again in the Vulgate version, ‘ A † woman having a *Python*,’ in our translation, ‘ A woman having a familiar spirit;’ and when, upon information from his servants about the place of her residence, he came to her house, he is said to have desired satisfaction from her in the matter which raised his anxiety, thus, ‘ I pray † thee divine to me by the *Python*,’ in our version, ‘ Divine to me by the familiar spirit;’ therefore Mr. Voltaire infers,

† 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. ‘ Mulier habens *Pythonem*’. This is very much the description of the maid at Philippi, who brought great gain to her owners by divination, Acts, xvi. 16. for she is also styled in the Vulgate version, ‘ Puella habens spiritum *pythonem*;’ and there indeed the Greek runs, παιδίσκη ἔχουσα πνεῦμα Πυθωρος, which last word is, according to Hesychius and Suidas, equivalent to δαιμονίου μαρτυρίν, a prophesying Daemon.

‡ Ibid. v. 8. ‘ Divina mihi in *Python*.’

though in the original Hebrew there is no such term as *Python* used, either in the description of the art which the woman professed, or in the disguised king's application to her to instruct him in the issue of the fight, by the power she pretended to have, or indeed through the whole history; but a term so remote in sound from it as **אֹב** *Ob*; nay, though even in the Greek version of the book, which was extant several hundred years before the Vulgate, no such word occur as *Python*, but one so different from it as *εγγαστριμυθος*; that the Hebrew record of these transactions of Saul with this woman must be a pro-

† This is the expression in the Septuagint version for **אֹב** *Ob* Levit. xix. 31. xx. 6. 27. Deut. xviii. 11. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3, 8, 9. 1 Chron. x. 13. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. and for **בַּעַלְתֵּי אֹב** *bag-malath ob*, two different times in the seventh verse of the chapter where this history lies. Deylingius, in his *Observationes Sacrae*, seems to have thought those persons were stiled *εγγαστριμυθοι* by the Greeks, who pretended to the art of evocating or bringing up the souls of the dead, and exhibiting them in visible form, that they might answer questions and solve doubts, from their use of a vessel filled with pure water, called by the Greeks *γαστηρ*, wherein were seen the images of the deceased; and that therefore this word was with propriety employed to turn the Hebrew here, since **בֹּתֵל** *obab*, is a bottle, Job, xxxii. 19. whence the Latin *obba* is a kind of wooden cup. But others think they were so called, who pretending to have a familiar spirit, made their bellies swell like bottles or bags to a great size, and then sent forth a small obscure voice, which seemed to come from these lower parts of the body thus swollen, where the divining spirit was believed to abide, and to dictate responses, themselves all the while not so much as moving their tongues or lips, from *γαστηρ* the belly. And indeed in many copies of the Vulgate version. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. there was a clause, as Lucas Brugensis tells us, though it be now expunged, which directed the reader's attention to this species of belly-diviners; for after these words, 'Et Saul abstulit magos et hariolos de terra,' there

duction or composition so late, in point of time, as the commerce of the Jews with the Greeks, after the time of Alexander. And by the same medium he might have argued, that the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy were also written after Alexander's victories: for there likewise in the Vulgate translation the obnoxious term *Python* is introduced, Lev. xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 10. So would he have destroyed at once the genuineness of that part of the Hebrew code, which the Jewish nation have ever esteemed the most sacred and venerable; by consequence, have struck a blow at the root of all revelation.

But can any reasoning be more stupid and absurd, if a man is sincere in it, or be more perverse and petulant, if he is not? With much greater justice might a person contend, that the book of Joshua was only composed after the irruption and settlement of the Gauls in Asia, that is, about 260 years before Christ, because in the Greek translation of this book, which was long prior to the Vulgate version, the name *Σαίρος* is given to a spear, chap. viii. 8. 26. which being of Gaulish original, could not be adopted into the Greek language till after that successful invasion; and indeed it hath been urged by Dr.

was added in them, 'Et interfecit eos qui *Pythones* habebant in ventre.' See his 'Romanæ Correctionis in Latinis Bibliis Editionis Vulgatae, jussu Sixti V. Pont. Max. recognitis, loca insigniora.' In the Septuagint also, there is express mention of this sort of diviners, for the Greek interpreters have Esai. viii. 19. *Τὸς κειρολογυντας, οἱ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας φωνεῖσιν*. The prophetic daemons themselves were also called *εγγαστριμυθοί*, for their agency in the one or the other way. Plutarch de Defect. Oracul. p. 414. Compare Pomer's Greek Antiq. p. 301.

Hoddy * and others, to shew that that version of this book was not framed in Ptolemy Philadelphus's time, like that of the Pentateuch, but under the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes the younger. But however such arguments may be applied with strength, to ascertain the date of a translation, it is plain, they can never with any intelligent and considerate person affect that of the original. Of this the unlearned may be very soon sensible, when he is informed, that upon the same principles upon which Mr. Voltaire reasons here, a person might with success undertake to prove, that the Hebrew book of Genesis was not written till the Saxons invaded Britain, because many words which are used in the English translation of this book are of Saxon etymology or derivation. For why should not the English version have weight in deciding the era of a Hebrew book, as well as the Latin one? But who can forbear smiling at the philosopher here, and pitying their understandings, who are caught by such cavils at the genuineness and authenticity of the Sacred Books as this? Very inattentive they must be, upon whom a † fling of this sort makes any hurtful impression.

* See Hoddy, *De Bibliorum textibus originalibus, versionibus, &c.* pp. 178---196.

† If there could be any apology for such a reflection by Mr. Voltaire, as this which we have been examining, it would be, that he imagined *Pythou* was the term in the Hebrew. But for this defence there is no room. For in his *Treatise on Toleration*, chap. xiii. p. 191. in a note, having observed there is but one passage in the whole Mosaic law, from which one might conclude, that Moses was acquainted with the opinion of the soul's surviving the body, *Deut. xviii.* where it is said, 'There shall not be found among you a consulter with familiar spirits, *Pythou*,' he adds, 'But what is very strange and worthy of observa-

SECTION II.

Of his charge against Daniel's prophecies, as forged after the destruction of the Persian empire by the Greeks, in the same Philosophy of History.

LET us next consider his accusation against the prophecies in Daniel, that they were forged after the overthrow and subversion of the empire of the Persians by the Greeks. For, says Mr. Voltaire in a passage above produced from the forty-sixth chapter of his Philosophy of History, 'Jaddus instantly displayed prophecies, which clearly indicated that Alexander would conquer the empire of Persia; prophecies that were ever made after the event had happened.' And it is the stale calumny of Porphyry, who, in the twelfth book of his work against the Christian religion, according to Jerome, affirmed,

tion is, that the word *Python* should be found in Deuteronomy, so long before that Greek term was known to the Hebrews. And indeed the term is not to be found in the Hebrew, of which we have a good translation.' So that he himself confesses it was not read in the Hebrew bible. There is indeed something unaccountably inconsistent here; for, if it was not in the Hebrew, how could there be a translation of it either good or bad? but let Mr. Voltaire and his admirers explain this. If *Python* had been used by the Greek translators who were Jews, which however is not the case, there would have been nothing strange in it at all upon Mr. Voltaire's own hypothesis, because it is allowed that even the five books of Moses, which were earliest translated into the Greek tongue, were not so rendered by them, till after the erection of the Macedonian empire through Alexander's conquests.

† Page 231. See Part 4. sect. 5. p. 28.

‘ That the book of Daniel * was not written by him
 ‘ whose name it bears, but by another who lived
 ‘ in Judea in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; and
 ‘ that it does not foretell things future, but relates
 ‘ things which had already happened.’ In this, however, Porphyry acted as unreasonable a part as a man would do now, who should deny the *Aeneid* to be a poem of the † Virgil who lived in the days of Augustus, after it hath been acknowledged for his production through all the intermediate centuries from his age to the present; for, in like manner, it appears the book of Daniel had been reckoned the book of Daniel the captive, who flourished in the successive reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius the Median, and not of any Daniel who was cotemporary with Epiphanes, through that long period which preceded Porphyry’s attack upon the genuineness of it.

Of the sense of the Jewish nation to this purpose, Josephus, who wrote about two hundred years before Porphyry, must be allowed a good witness. Now he every where, without any hesitation or doubt, supposes it to have been written by the famous Daniel, who was carried away from Judea to Babylon in the

* ‘ Contra prophetam Danielem duodecimum librum scripsit Porphyrius, nolens eum ab ipso, cujus inscriptus est nomine, esse compositum; sed a quodam, qui temporibus Antiochi, qui appellatus est Epiphanes, fuerit in Judaea. Et non tam Danielem ventura dixisse, quam illum narrasse praeterita.’ See Jerome’s preface to his Commentary on Daniel, tom. 3. p. 1071.

† So however did father Harduin, and thereby expose himself to universal ridicule; as also by contending, that none of the pieces which are printed under Horace’s name were genuine, except the satires and epistles.

third year of Jehoiakim, and on this account to have been a great while extant before the wars of Antiochus Epiphanes. Thus, he tells in one place, after mentioning the honours which Daniel received from Darius upon his miraculous preservation in the den of lions, ‘The† books which he wrote are read among us untill now; and we have been confident from them, that Daniel had intercourse with God.’ And having quoted from them the prediction about the ram and the goat, with the interpretation thereof, in which it makes a part, that a certain king would arise from the Greeks, who should conquer the Jewish nation, overthrow their laws, destroy their polity, plunder their temple, and make the sacrifices cease to be offered three years, he adds, ‘These things indeed our nation† suffered under Antiochus Epiphanes, as Daniel wrote and saw would come to pass many years before.’ Again, he makes Jaddua to have produced the book of Daniel to Alexander* the king of Macedon, at his visit to Jerusalem, which must have been 160 years prior to Antiochus’s time, ‘The book of Daniel having been shewed to the king, in which he discovered, that one of the Greeks would destroy the empire of the Persians, he rejoiced, imagining himself was the person intended.’ Once more he acquaints us,

† Antiq. 10. 11. 7. Τα βιβλία ὅσα δὴ συγγραψάμενος καταλειποῖν ἀναβιωσκειται παρ’ ἡμῖν ἐτι καὶ νυν, &c.

† Ibid. Καὶ δὴ ταῦτα ἡμῶι συνέβη τῷ ἐθνὶ παθεῖν ὑπ’ Ἀντιόχου τοῦ Ἐπιφανέως καθὼς εἶδεν ὁ Δανιήλος καὶ πολλοὶς ἐτίσιν ἐμπροσθεν ἀνέγραψε.

* See *ibid.* 11. 8. 5. and compare Part 1. sect. 5. p. 28.

‘ That the *defolation of the temple by Antiochus, and the Macedonians, was foretold in Daniel’s prophecy 408 years before it happened.’ So full is he about the book of Daniel’s being genuine, or written by the person whose name it bears, and in the age which it pretends.

Yet there is not wanting other testimony to the same point; for in the first book of Maccabees, (to omit the use of the phrase, ‘ the abomination of desolation,’ by the writer of it, chap. i. 54. which hath been thought to be taken from Daniel; because I apprehend there is little or no force in the argument from it to confute Porphyry’s hypothesis, though it hath been sometimes urged with that view, as the writer lived after Antiochus’s wars,) Mattathias, who was coeval with this enemy of the Jews, commemorates in a speech to his sons, chap. ii. 50—6. Daniel’s deliverance for his innocency from the mouth of lions, and the preservation of Ananias, Mishael, and Azarias, amidst the flaming-fire, which are events recorded in the book of Daniel, when he professes

* Ibid. 12. 7. 6.—Κατα την Δανιηλν προφητειαν προ τετρακοσίων καὶ οκτώ γεγονέναι τῶν. I may observe likewise, that in his Antiq. 10. 10. 6. having recited some things which are in the book of Daniel, he adds, ‘ he mentioned them as he found them in their ‘ antient books,’ and that he had professed in the beginning of the work, to translate only the books of the Hebrews into the Greek tongue, Proem. sect. 2. Moreover, in his first book against Apion, sect. 8. he speaks of the books of the prophets, among which this of Daniel was one, as comprehending things which happened in their own respective times, τα κατ’ αὐτὴν πραχθέντα, from the age of Moses until that of Artaxerxes, which is altogether inconsistent with Porphyry’s date of the book in Antiochus’s time, since Artaxerxes was long dead before Antiochus Epiphanes reigned, even almost 250 years.

to bring to their remembrance ‘ The facts done by
 ‘ their fathers, in their time, through zeal for the
 ‘ Lord;’ And Eleazar again recites both histories in his
 prayer in the third book, vi. 7. 8. But these allusions or
 references afford no contemptible evidence, that the
 book of Daniel was known before Antiochus’s op-
 pression of the Jews, and the miseries they suffered
 at his hands. And surely after such proof, I need
 not insist upon that which arises from the works of
 the Christian fathers. Porphyry then spoke against
 the general consent of the world about the matter,
 when he threw out that heavy charge above quoted :
 wherefore he deserved no credit, unless he had brought
 irrefragable reasons from the book itself, to destroy
 its pretensions to that original which it claims. But
 did he offer such unanswerable objections to its ge-
 nuineness? Or have they been advanced since, by Spi-
 noza, Collins, and others who adopted his sentiments?
 I think not; as will appear from the following short
 remarks upon the most specious and plausible of
 them.

As to the Greek etymologies or derivations of
 words, whence Porphyry concluded the book of
 Daniel * must have been the forgery of some Greek

* Hieronym. pr. ad explanat. in Daniel. tom. 3. 1071. — ‘ Græ-
 ‘ ci sermonis esse commentum, quia in Susannae fabula continetur, di-
 ‘ cente Daniele ad presbyteros, *Απο τε σχινη σχιται, καὶ ἀπο τε*
 ‘ *πρινη πριται*, quam etymologiam magis Graeco sermoni convenire
 ‘ quam Hebræo; cui et Eusebius, et Origenes, et Apollinaris pari
 ‘ sententia responderunt, Susannae, Belisquæ ac Draconis fabulas non
 ‘ contineri in Hebræo. — nec se debere respondere Porphyrio pro
 ‘ his, quæ nullam Scripturæ Sanctæ auctoritatem præbeant.’ See Su-
 fanna, v. 44 — 59. See also Hieronym. Praefat. in Danielis versionem
 apud Bibl. Vulgat. ‘ Daniel apud Hebræos nec Susannae habet histori-

writer, these are not to be found at all in the book which was received by the Hebrews, and which from them is admitted into our canon; but only in the apocryphal story of Sufanna, where indeed the allusions between *σχιρος* and *σχισας*, *πριος* and *πρισας* occur in the speech to the elders, which that prophet is there made to deliver.

Daniel might be a young man in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, when he was chosen by Ashpenaz master of the eunuchs, to stand before Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. i. 3. and yet might have all that reputation for wisdom and piety, and favour or acceptance with God, which he is supposed to have in the book of Ezekiel, chap. xiv. 14. and xxviii. 3. For Ezekiel uttered these prophecies only in the sixth and eleventh years of Jehoiachin's captivity, (which appears by comparing the dates of these different revelations from God, wherein Daniel is celebrated, as they are to be learned from chap. viii. 1. and xxvi. 1.) by consequence, when Daniel in respect of the last of Ezekiel's encomiums, had been about eighteen, and in respect of the former of them, had been about thirteen years famous, on account of his declaration of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and of the meaning of it, after he himself had forgotten it, and all the Chaldean wise men had been unable to find it out; seeing this happened in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin's predecessor, whose reign ex-

- * am, nec hymnum trium puerorum, nec Belis Draconisque fabulas,—
- * audiui ego quendam de praeceptoribus Judaeorum, cum Sufannae derideret historiam, et a Graeco nescio quo eam diceret confictam, illud
- * opponere, quod Origeni quoque Africanus opposuit, etymologias has
- * ατθ τθ, &c. de Graeco sermone descendere.*

tended to eleven years in whole, 2 Kings, xxiii. 31, and xxiv. 8.

Though the Greek version of Daniel which we now have be Theodotion's, who is generally allowed to have published his Greek translation of the Old Testament, so late as the reign of Commodus the Roman emperor, about the year of our Lord 192, there was a more antient Greek version of it, as well as of the other Jewish Scriptures. This is evident from Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Eusebius, and Jerome, who also, in his * preface to his translation of the book of Daniel, discovers to us that it passed under the name of 'The translation according to the Seventy,' and bears witness, at the same time that he owns his ignorance of the reason, why the churches of Christ did not read it, but Theodotion's, that it was with justice discarded because it varied much from the original.

Is it said, there is no Chaldee paraphrase of this book by Jonathan, as there is of the other prophets? not to insist from the testimonies quoted by Bishop Chandler, that there was an antient † Targum on

* *Praef. in Danielē, sub fin. Vulg. vers.* 'Danielē prophetam post 70 interpretes Domini Salvatoris Ecclesiae non legunt, utentes Theodotionis versione, et hoc cur acciderit nescio;—hoc unum affirmare possum, quod multumra veritate discordat, et recto iudicio repudiatus sit.' To the same purpose he likewise writes, in his commentary on Daniel, cap. 4. 'Iudicio magistrorum ecclesiae editio 70 repudiata est, et Theodotionis vulgo legitur, quae et Hebraeo et ceteris translatoribus congruit.' That more antient version of Daniel moreover had a column allotted to it in Origen's Hexapla.

† He says there is a passage in the Mishna Tract. Iadim sive De Lotione Manuum, c. 4. sect. 5. which insinuates, that before our Saviour's time, there was a Targum on Daniel. I lay it before the reader

Daniel, though it be now perished, unless it lurk in some corner, as that upon the * *Chronicles* lay concealed till near the end of the last century, there was not the same need of it as of paraphrases upon the other prophets, for the instruction of the Jews, after they had lost the knowledge of the original Hebrew, because the greater † part of the book is written in the Chaldee language. Accordingly, for the same reason in all probability, neither is there any Targum on the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which among the Jews make one book: yet the authenticity thereof was never on this account disputed. Jonathan therefore, however he might omit a Chaldee translation of Daniel's book, might hold it notwithstanding in high respect and ‡ esteem.

as it is translated in Surenhusius's edition of the *Mishna*, and leave its force to his consideration, 'Targum in Ezram et Daniele non polluit manus. Targum Hebraicè scriptum et contra, ut et Scriptura Hebraicè, non polluent manus. Sed nunquam pollunt, nisi Affyriacè scriptum in pelle, et cum atramento.' Bartenora explains 'Targum Hebraicè scriptum, Targum in Daniele et Ezram.'

* It was first published by Becke, at Augsburgh in Germany, 1680, and 1683.

† This Jerome observed long ago, both concerning the books of Daniel and Ezra, *Præfat. in Daniel. ubi supra*, 'Sciendum quoque est Daniele maxime et Esdræ Hebraicis quidem literis, sed Chalæo sermone conscriptos.' And would any know what he comprehended under the title of Ezra's book, he may be soon gratified: for in his preface to Esdras and Nehemiah he writes thus, after saying he had been solicited to translate into Greek the book of Esdras, 'Nec quæquam moveat quod unus a nobis liber editus est, quia et apud Hebræos Esdræ Nehemiæque sermones in unum volumen coarctantur.'

‡ Suitably, he, in different places of his paraphrases on the prophets, uses undeniably the terms, phrases, and ideas of Daniel for ex-

As for these† names of musical instruments in this book, chap. iii. ver. 5, 10. which are supposed to be derived from the Greek, and made an argument that it was not written till after the time of Alexander, when the Greek empire prevailed; it is doubtful still, whether they had this original, whatever likeness or similitude of sound there may be between them and some Greek vocables: the more that the Greeks‡ themselves are said to have learned music from the eastern nations. But supposing these few words with a Chaldean termination to have a Greek etymology, on account of the invention or improvement of the musical instruments which they are used to describe, by some Greek or Greeks, what force can there be herein to disprove the genuineness of the book of Daniel, against such positive evidence for it? Such foreign names might very well have made their way into the Babylonian and Persian courts, in representing the manners of which they only occur, through such intercourse and correspondence as appears to have been between the Greek and eastern nations, even§ before Alexander's time.

plaining their sense, as on Habak. iii. 17. Isai. xi. 4. Amos, ix. 8.

† The names of all the musical instruments mentioned there are, Karna, Mashrokitha, Kitheros, Saccheba, Pefantherin, Sumphonia, or, as it is in the tenth verse, Siphonia.

‡ Strabo, in his Geography, lib. 4. p. 471. says, 'Some musical instruments have barbarous names, as *Ναβλα, Σαμβυκη, Βαρβιτος* ' and many others;' and speaks of *Κιθαρα* (the harp,) as of Asiatic invention, quoting in proof hereof a line from one of Euripides's plays. Now two of these very instruments, in which he instances, occur here, according to the Greek version, I mean *Κιθαρα* and *Σαμβυκη*.

§ Herodotus, lib. 2 p. 149. Edit. Stephan. tells us that the Greeks learned from the Babylonians the *πολος* and *γρωμιν*, the dial and

Is it urged, there was no such writer before the time of Jesus, the author of the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, who yet lived a considerable time after the return of the Jews from captivity in Babylon, because he omits him in his enumeration, when he says, 'Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us,' xliv. 1.? Besides, that this would prove too much, even that there had been no such wise and holy man as Daniel in the age of the captivity, in opposition to Ezekiel's most express testimony to his eminent reputation, since the author does not propose to confine his catalogue of them whom he would extol to those that were writers, but to extend it to all famous ancestors without such restriction; besides this, I say, it is evident no conclusion against Daniel's living and writing in a past age can be reasonably built upon his silence at all, since Abel, Ezra, and others, likewise illustrious in a former period, are passed over by him, as may be seen by every one who pleases to examine his detail; on what account, we cannot pretend to say.

Hath the clearness of the prophecies in Daniel's book been improved as a presumption, that the book was written after the events had happened which it pretended to foretell? How strange a cavil is this! Not to mention that some of them reach beyond the times † of Epiphanes, may not prophecies be clearer

style, which with its shadow pointeth the hours, and the twelve parts of the day, in the reign of Sesostris, who by many is made the Shifak of Scripture, as we saw above, part 2. sect. 21. page 315. but by some is placed far earlier.

† As to Porphyry's pretence for concluding that the writer lived

according to the pleasure of God, to whom all futurities more near and more distant are manifest, without ministering any ground of suspicion, by the more abundant fulness of light which is in them, that they are forgeries after the events have happened? And are there not predictions as plain, yea more plain and explicite, in other books of the Old Testament, as in particular, *Isaiah*, xxxvii. 26—36. xlv. 24—28. xlv. 1—15. *Jerem.* xxv. 8. xxvii. 1—22. whose genuineness notwithstanding was never on this account questioned?

Finally, as to the argument which hath been raised from *Daniel*, xii. 13. where the angel says to Daniel, ‘Go thou thy way till the end, for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days,’ which words have been interpreted to contain an assurance, that he should see the end of Antiochus’s desolations, and been hereon brought to prove, that the real author of the book lived about that time; I answer, this is not the true sense of the words. It is indeed very unreasonable to put this sense upon them; for it is to make the writer weakly blunder at the close of his book, after carrying on an imposture with dexterity through the whole, or inconsiderately betray his true age in the last verse, after passing himself very artfully through more than 300 verses that

in Antiochus’s reign, that succeeding events were falsely described in these prophecies which related to them, while occurrences previous to it were justly represented, there is no foundation for it; the charge was owing to his own misinterpretation of the predictions which regarded things that followed that epocha: these have also been verified in their real and just meaning, as may be seen in *Jerome*, *Sir Isaac Newton*, and others.

preceded, as contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius, when from the accession of the first of them to the throne, till the deliverance of the Jews from Antiochus's oppression, there was no shorter an interval than the space of 440 years, which is a slip against all probability.—And as it is unreasonable to expound the words thus, so it is no way necessary. They may be a call to him to finish his prophecy with a comfortable assurance that he should rest in his grave till the period of time, and then rise to the enjoyment of a celestial inheritance, as Theodotion * seems to have understood them; or they may be an admonition to him to be easy, instead of anxious and dejected on his own account, since he would come to the end of his life in the fruition of the present honour and dignity which he held; so קֶצֶת *Ketz* is used for the end of life, Pf. xxxix. 4. Job, vi. 11. and גֶּרַל *Garal*, is put for that lot or portion of worldly happiness which is assigned to a man by the providence of God, Pf. xvi. 5. and this interpretation is very agreeable to the rest of the book, in which it is intimated over and over, that his visions related not to events at hand, but to events remote in time, and at a considerable distance, x. i. 14. &c.

There is then no weight in the objections which are taken from the book itself, to overthrow the direct evidence which there is for its being a work of Daniel the captive; they are all capable of a fair and satisfactory solution, nay many of them appear idle

* Theodotion's translation is, Καὶ σὺ δεῦρο, καὶ ἀναπαύει' ἐτι γὰρ ἡμέραι καὶ ὥραι εἰς ἀναπληρωσὶν συντελείας, καὶ ἀνάσκη εἰς τοὺς κληροῦν σὺ εἰς συντελείας ἡμερῶν.

and † frivolous. Moreover the language is far more pure in it than in Onkelos's Targum, as this again is more correct than that of some later Targums, which is an evidence of the much greater antiquity of Daniel's book than of that composition, though it be looked upon as written about Christ's time.—The characters of the princes mentioned in this book, agree very well with the accounts of them in other historians about the same era.—The symbolical representations given therein of kingdoms and states, are such as are to be met with in the other prophets, and particularly in those who lived about the Babylonish captivity, as may be seen by comparing Ezek. i. 15. xxiv. 3. Jerem. xviii. 4. Zechariah, chap. iv. v. vi. &c.—There does not, in fine, appear any intention in the writer, as might have been expected in a cheat and deceiver, either to raise his own glory, or that of his nation: for he ascribes his extraordinary knowledge to God, who is the revealer of secrets, and represents his own and his people's sins as the causes of the hardships they had suffered, Dan. ii. 18, 23, 28, 29, 30. and ix. 4—14. We may therefore upon the whole be sure, that the book of Daniel is genuine, and with confidence look upon it as another of Mr. Voltaire's false assertions, 'that the book was forged after the events which it pretended to foretell;' but how important is it that this should be made manifest! The authenticity of

† Whoever would examine the matter more fully, may consult Huetii Demonstr. Evangelica, Prop. 4. De Danielis prophetia, sect. 11. &c. and the writings of the two learned Chandlers upon this subject against Collins, the one the bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, and the other the famous dissenting minister lately deceased.

the book being ascertained, the prophecies which it contains afford most astonishing proofs of God's exact foreknowledge of the changes and revolutions which arrive in the political and moral world, and constitute a very striking and convictive part of the evidence for God's having made supernatural and extraordinary discoveries of his schemes unto the Jewish people. Upon it, accordingly, the attacks of the enemies of religion, both in antient and modern times, have been more virulent.

SECTION III.

Of his calling in the same work our book of Job an Hebrew translation of an Arabic original, and denying it to be a Jewish book.

IN the forty-eighth chapter of the same Philosophy of History he writes thus, ' Job is represented * as an ' Arabian pastor, living upon the confines of Persia. ' We have already observed, that the Arabian words ' retained in the Hebrew translation of this antient ' allegory, evince that the book was first written by ' the Arabians.' He refers no doubt to chapter seventh of that treatise, where he affirms without any hesitation, ' The allegory of Job † was certainly wrote ' in Arabic; as the Hebrew and Greek versions have ' retained several Arabic terms.' And he alludes, I suppose, to both passages a little downwards, when he says, ' The allegory of Job, ‡ which we have spoken ' of, is not a Jewish book.' But is all this right? I apprehend, not.

* Page 231.

† Page 25.

‡ Page 236.

That Job was not a fictitious, but a real Person.

MR. Voltaire seems to think Job a fictitious, instead of a real person; by consequence, his affluence, his integrity, his losses, his disease, his submission, the restoration of his health, the recovery of his fortune with improvement, the renewal of the same number of sons and daughters to him with that which had been taken away in the beginning of his calamities, as well as the dialogues between him and his friends, and other incidents, wholly invented for conveying some moral instructions. Nor is he singular in this opinion; for some learned men, both * Jews and Christians, † have entertained it. Nevertheless it appears most probable, if I can judge, that he was not an imaginary, but a real person, who possessed such eminent virtue and superior riches, who was visited with such signal death of children, and ruin of substance, and grievous malady, who shew-

* Even Maimonides seems to have embraced this notion, at least to have had a propensity and bias toward it; for he says, Moreh Nebuchim, part 3. cap. 22. ‘Nosti quosdam esse qui dicunt, Jobum ‘nunquam fuisse neque creatum esse; sed historiam illius nihil aliud esse quam Parabolam.’ And he afterwards observes, that their inability, who contend his book is a true history, to fix the time in which he lived, some making him contemporary with the Patriarchs, some with Moses, some with David, and some with the wise men of Babylon, confirms this opinion, that he never really existed.—‘Quae incertitudo sententiam illorum confirmet, qui dicunt illum nec fuisse nec creatum esse.’ Then he goes on. ‘Sive autem revera fuerit, sive non fuerit, &c.’

† It was a prevailing notion among the Anabaptists in last age, and hath been adopted by Salmasius and Le Clerc.

ed such uncommon patience and resignation amidst unparallel'd calamities, till he was hurried into some indecent complaints by the length of their continuance, and the reproaches of his friends, from whom he expected the most tender sympathy and condolence, and who enjoyed such extraordinary prosperity in his latter end, as we read of in the book which takes its appellation from him.

This supposition is favoured by the more particular and distinct account of his name, country, character and circumstances, than is to be found of a person in parabolical relations or apologues for practical purposes, as every one will be sensible by comparing such both in the Old and New Testament. 2 Sam. xii. 1. and xiv. 5. Luke x. 30. xii. 16, &c. For how great an air hath the book hereby of relating not feigned, but actual events and transactions? whatever necessity there may be to admit decoration and polishing in the discourses of the interlocutors: since it cannot be thought that any persons would speak in a manner so elaborate and harmonic extemporaneously, and without premeditation; far less that Job would talk in such sublime and measured stile so long when he had made no preparation for it, and, far from being at ease, was burdened with heavy and sharp affliction.—Yet the same opinion which naturally arises in the mind from a survey of the piece itself, is exceedingly strengthened by the references that are made to him as a real person in scripture. For God himself, in the prophecies of Ezekiel, mentions him in conjunction with Noah and Daniel, as a man of so distinguished righteousness, that it might be thought he would save the land from fa-

mine, sword, noisome beast and pestilence, out of regard to him and to them, notwithstanding its general wickedness and prevailing corruption; and declares that hopes built on such a foundation should be disappointed, Ezek. xiv. 13.—21. ‘Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness.’ Now, why should Job’s existence be questioned more than that of Noah and Daniel, to whom he here succeeds? Again, the apostle James proposes him to Christians in a state of suffering, as a pattern of patience, whom they should imitate, and of a happy escape and deliverance from troubles, with the hope of which they should solace themselves, after he hath set before them the prophets in general; v. 10, 11. ‘Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy who endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.’ But how would the force and energy of the admonition be destroyed if Job was a fictitious person, and his calmness under distress, and prosperity after it, wholly ideal? Yea, what writer of any abilities, would have introduced him as a model of patience, if it was merely imaginary, after calling their attention to the messengers of God in former ages, by whom it had been really exhibited? It appears as absurd indeed as would be a father’s recommending the chastity of a Pamela, or other fictitious female, to his daughter’s regard, after reciting that of Lucretia, or any other, who

hath been ennobled by unshaken constancy, amidst the most pressing and violent temptations to lewdness. After so high authorities, I need scarce add, he is spoken of by the author of the Apocryphal book of Tobit † as a real person, whom God permitted to fall into great distresses, and to be insulted by kings, that he might shew him to posterity as an example of patience; Tobit ii. 11.—15. And likewise by Aristaëas in his history of the Jews. For, according to a passage of it preserved by Alexander Polyhistor, he says, he was a descendent of Esau by Bassarah his wife, as we will see presently, with whose account also agrees in some particulars, the addition to the book of Job in the Septuagint. We may therefore consider Job as a real, † rather than an allegorical or fabulous person.

† This indeed is only true according to the Latin version thereof. However, Jerome says he made this from the Chaldee copy of the book, in his preface to it. See Vulg. Bibl. sub fin. The words are, 'Contigit autem ut ex nido hirundinum dormienti illi (Tobiae) calida stercorea inciderent super oculos ejus, fieretque caecus. Hanc autem tentationem ideo permisit Dominus evenire illi, ut posteris daretur exemplum patientiae ejus, sicut et sancti Job.—Nam sicut beato Job insultabant reges, ita isti parentes et cognati ejus irridebant vitam ejus, &c.' In the Greek version of the book, and in the English translation of it, which I have, and which I believe is that printed in our bibles which have the Apocrypha, there is no mention of Job at all.

‡ The late Dr. Sherlock, in the second Dissertation annexed to his book on Prophecy, hath formed an argument for the reality of the history contained in the book of Job, and against its being a mere poetical fiction, from Job xix. 25. which I leave to be perused there, if the reader shall incline; as its force depends upon the supposition that that much disputed passage expresses Job's faith of a resurrection, whilst it was a secret to all his friends. See pages 245, 246. Edit. 6.—→ To his being a real person, some objections have been made; but they

Of Job's Country.

WHEN, however, Mr. Voltaire says ' he is represented to have been an Arabian pastor,' I have no difference with him, if by pastor he mean a great proprietor of cattle. For I also think it likely the real Job, who is described to have possessed very numerous flocks and herds, resided in Arabia. The land where he dwelt is called indeed in scripture, the land of Uz, or *Uy Gnutz*, perhaps from *Uz*, or *Gnutz*, the first born son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, who settled here, Gen. xxii. 20. But this seems to have been the region of Aufitis, * which was a part of Arabia the Desert, according to the common acceptation of this name, though according to † the addition in the Seventy abovementioned,

appear to me to have little weight in them. Is all explicate mention of him omitted by the writer to the Hebrews in his catalogue of worthies? In like manner, Joshua, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others very illustrious, are passed over. Is Josephus silent about him? This ought to create no prejudice against his existence; for he intended only to comprehend in his history the affairs of the Jews, and things connected with them. But Job was a foreigner, whose changes and vicissitudes of fortune did not affect their interest. Thus, in his preface to his Antiquities, sect. 2. he gives this account of the work. *Μελλει γαρ περιεξεν ἅπασαν την παρ' ἡμιν ἀρχαιολογίαν, και την διατάξιν τε πολιτευματος εκ των Ἑβραϊκων μεθερμηνευομενην γραμμάτων.*

* This will appear more easy, when the manner in which the Greeks expressed the letter *Y Hgain* or *ajin* of the Hebrews is attended to. I have observed that, in the second column of Origen's Hexapla, which represented the Hebrew text in Greek characters, the Hebrew *גנאל* is αλ twice over in Genesis i. 2. ibid v. 5. *גנאל* *gnereb* is ερεβ, and so on.

† This addition at the end of the Greek version of Job (which, say

which places Job therein, and according to Aristaeas, who gives him † the same situation, it was upon the confines of it. Accordingly we may observe Terah, the father of Nahor, and Abram lived in that neighbourhood at Harran, or Harrae, on the opposite bank of the Euphrates. Nigh this also had the Chaldeans, or Chasdim, the descendents of Chesed, another son of Nahor, Gen. xxii. 22. fixed their habitation, which agrees well to their being said to have carried away Job's camels. Nor were the Sabeans, who forcibly seized his oxen and asses, far distant, provided we do not understand by them, a people of this name inhabiting Arabia Felix, as Ps. lxxii. 10. the riches and fruitfulness of which country forbids our thinking it was a nest of persons who made incursions for the sake of booty; but a people so de-

the authors of the Universal History, 3. 350. is to be found also at the end of the Arabic and Vulgate versions, but is not to be met with in the vulgate of Sixtus and Clement at all) is pretended, by the writer of it, to be a translation from a Syriac book, *ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς Βίβλου*, and represents 'Job to have lived in the country of Aushitis, on the ' borders of Idumea and Arabia,' says, 'his name was before, Jobab; ' that he married an Arabian woman, by whom he begat a son named ' Ennon; that his father was Zareh, of the sons of Esau, and his mother ' Bofforah; so that he was the fifth from Abraham; that he reigned in ' the country of Edom;' (which account of his being a king, was perhaps a tale founded on Gen. xxxvi. 33.) and describes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, as kings of the Temanites, Zauchacans and Minacans, respectively.

† Aristaeas, as his words are quoted, Euseb. praep. Evang. lib. 9. c. 25. says, he was born to Esau by his wife Bassarah, in the country of Edom, that he dwelt in the territory called Aushitis, on the confines of Idumea and Arabia, that he was formerly named Jobab; tells the same story of the three kings; and adds, that Elious, the son of Barachiel the Zobite, also came to visit him in distress.

nominated from their residence in Saba, a town of Arabia the Desert, according to Ptolemy, which hath been conjectured to have received its appellation from Sheba, grandson of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 3. as it is affirmed his father went from Canaan, in quest of a new settlement, into the east country, Gen. xxiii. 6. For this is a common expression for Arabia in scripture, because it was situated to the east of Canaan; whence also its inhabitants are called the children of the east, Judges vi. 3.—In this vicinity also we may suppose we find Job's friends, Elihu the Buzite, and Eliphaz the Temanite. For Buzitis was a territory adjoining, perhaps so called from Buz, Nahor's second son, Gen. xxii. 21. And Teman, perhaps so named from Teman, Esau's grandson, Gen. xxxvi. 11. 15. is mentioned at the same time with Buz, Jerem. xxv. 23. as a place contiguous. Nor need we be at a loss about Bildad the Shuhite, if he derived this title from Shuh, or Shuah, another of Abraham's children by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 2. since he, like his brother, departed also eastward from Canaan, that he might search out a commodious habitation.

That the book of Job was written, in Arabic, according to Mr. Voltaire's sense of the expression, is denied.

BUT though I agree with Mr. Voltaire, that Job was an Arabian * pastor, I cannot admit that the

* Some, indeed, on the authority of the addition in the 70, and of the genealogy of Jobab, Gen. xxxvi. 33. 1 Chron. i. 44. whom they suppose to be the same with Job, make him an Idumean, and argue from Lament. iv. 21. 'Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that

book of Job was written in Arabic. So, indeed, says Mr. Voltaire, with whom the Hebrew and Greek copies of it are equally versions, because both have retained several Arabic terms. Has he, however, reason on his side? The celebrated Frederic Spanheim, I own, supposed that the ground of this book, i.e. that the facts and discourses in it were, as to their substance or material part, first extant in Arabic; they having been recorded originally in that tongue, either by Job himself at his leisure, after his restoration to an easy and comfortable state, for the benefit of himself and his posterity; as it hath been usual for many religious and good men, such as he was, to keep an account or journal of the most memorable transactions of their lives; or else by one of his friends, whether Elihu, or some other who was a witness to his affliction, and heard, or bore himself a part in the dialogues holden on that occasion*. Nevertheless, he reckoned that the book itself, in its present form, was first written in Hebrew, and almost wholly in Hebrew metre or verse, upon this Arabic groundwork, by some Jewish prophet in the land of Canaan, (wherefore he says, Job, the Arabian, is fitly denominated by him there, one of the children of

‘ dwellest in the land of Uz.’ But allowing this to be a right version, it will only prove, that in Jeremiah’s time, the Edomites were become masters of the land of Uz, not that it was their original and ancient abode. Bochart, however, will have the land of Uz, in Lamentations, but another name for Idumea, and fancies it got this appellation from Uz, a descendent of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 28. The authors of the Ancient Universal History, appear to have thought Job an Idumæan, 2. 170. and 3. 350. though he, as will afterwards be observed, did not. See Boch. Phaleg. lib 2. cap. 8.

* See Spanhemii Historia Jobi. cap. 16.

the east,) and that it was committed by him to the custody of the Jewish church, like those other ancient oracles which compose the old Testament. And in the same manner may some others have judged, tho' all who have approved his leading sentiment, may not have agreed with him in every notion about the time or author of the piece. This scheme, however, is not at all our author's, otherwise the paragraph quoted from him, might have been allowed to pass without reprehension. For he says, without distinguishing between the book in its first *stamina* or elements, and in its now finished and perfect shape, that it was written originally in Arabic; that the Hebrew copy is as much a version as the Greek copy; and is positive that it is not a Jewish book, as we saw before * he was for excluding it from the writings of the Hebrew canon. And what is the great argument upon which he founds this important conclusion, and by which he would persuade us of its indubitable certainty? It is no more than that some Arabic terms are retained in it; an argument which is by no means sufficient to justify the assertion, and to make us proselytes to his opinion. Nevertheless, that we may shew the weakness and futility of it the more fully, it will be requisite to consider the age in which Job lived.

Of the age in which Job lived.

Now, as to the age of Job, he seems to have lived in a pretty early period. Some indeed have supposed him to have lived about the time of the Babylonish

* Part I. sect. 6. page 30, 31.

captivity, because he is mentioned by God himself, in Ezekiel's prophecy, two different times after Daniel, who was one of the Jewish prisoners whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away in Jehoiakim's time; as this Daniel again, is likewise mentioned twice, according to the real order of his birth, after Noah, chap. xiv. 14, 20. But specious as this plea is * at first view, it hath little force in it. For the order observed in enumerating persons in scripture, so often varies from that which the time of their nativity into the world required, that no conclusion can be drawn from preference of recital, to preference or precedence of living. Thus, Gen. vi. 10. Noah is said to have begot three sons, Shem, Ham and Japhet. But were they born into the world in the order in which they stand in this catalogue? No. For Ham was his youngest son, and Japhet the eldest, Gen. ix. 24. x. 21. Again we are told, 'Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor and Haran,' Gen. xi. 27. But was Abraham older than these two brothers in the list? Far otherwise. For the sacred historian is express, that he was only seventy-five years old at his removal from Charran, after his

* See *ibid*, page 32. where, however, hath been, through inadvertence, an omission of a short clause, which the tenor of the reasoning required, and even the truth of the fact did claim. For, though Grotius, Codrucus, and the learned bishop of Gloucester were of opinion, that the book of Job was written about the age of the captivity, not they, but others imagined Job lived but a little before that event.—The sentence should have run, both to compleat the argument, and to be agreeable to fact, after mentioning the judgment of these persons about the date of the book of Job, as follows, 'And might fancy that Job lived when that calamity was at no great distance, as some others have thought, among whose arguments, &c.'

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father Terah's death; though this happened not till he was two hundred and five years old, or had survived the 70th year of his life, in which he is here said to have begot these sons, one hundred and thirty-five years. Abraham * must therefore have been younger than the rest, and not born till Terah was much more advanced in age. Once more; is not Moses often mentioned before Aaron, in the history of their achievements? Exod. iv. 29. v. 1; &c. Yet Aaron was senior, as is evident from comparing Num. xxxiii. 38, 39. and Deut. xxxiv. 5,—7. In like manner then, Job might be of a far superior age to Daniel, though postponed to him in Ezekiel's catalogue; and he might be mentioned last for

* It must be allowed, the historian never intended to point out Abraham as Terah's eldest son, by placing him first in the list of those whom he begot when he was 70 years old, unless we will be so unreasonable as to make him a person so destitute of all understanding and attention, as, within the compass of a few lines, to give accounts first of the season of life when Terah begot Abraham, and of the length of his years when he died, and then of Abraham's age at this last event, which are obviously and plainly incompatible with one another. Besides, the history itself leads us to believe, that Haran, though last mentioned among Terah's sons, like Japhet among Noah's, was the first born, instead of Abraham. For we are expressly told, Nahor, Abraham's brother, married his daughter Milcah; as Iscah, his other daughter, is thought to be the Sarai whom Abraham took; wherefore, Jonathan adds, in his Targum on Gen. xii. 29. 'The same Iscah is Sarai.' and Josephus calls Sarai, in one place, Haran's daughter; in another, Abram's niece; in another, the sister of Lot, his brother Haran's son. Antiq. 1. 6, 5. and 7. 1. Now this being the case, all Voltaire's ridicule, founded on representing Abram 135 years old at Terah, or Tharacus's death, in the 16th chapter of his Philosophy of History, page 74. falls to the ground. On which account, I have dwelt longer on this example.

his transcendent piety and virtue, or because he was not of the seed of Jacob, as Daniel was. But though some have supposed Job so late as the captivity, it is not the general sense of those who have accounted him a real person, nor even of those, which is remarkable, who have made the book itself the composition of an age considerably posterior to that in which he lived. Much the greater part of such have placed him before the *exodus*, or the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. And this opinion they think strongly favoured by many things in the book itself; for instance, the inventory of his wealth, which is described to consist in multitudes of cattle of various kinds, like Abraham's, Lot's, Isaac's, Laban's, Esau's and Jacob's;—The resemblance between his sacrifices and the patriarchal ones, Gen. xii. 7. 8. xiii. 18. xxii. 3. &c;—And there being no mention of any kind of idolatry in it, except the worship of the sun, and moon, and stars, that is, of the idolatry which was more antient than any other, Job, xxxi. 26, 27, 28. They remark also, with the same view, the omission of the method of God's declaring his will to Moses, when Elihu enumerates the different ways by which he was accustomed to discover himself to men, xxxiii. 14, 15. and many of them at least, the entire † silence which is observed by the speak-

† I express myself thus, because it is not the opinion of all who place Job before the Exodus, that there is no reference or allusion to these wonders, and to the Jewish law and history after them. For the learned Dr. Warburton and Mr. Heath &c. suppose some touches at such things, whereby the writer of the book, whom they make of an age far posterior to Job, violated the strict rules of decorum, which should have been observed to the critical perfection of his piece, and

kers about the miracles in Egypt and at the Red sea, how pertinent soever they were to be urged, for shew-

betrayed, like some of the greatest masters in dramatic writing, his own real time and country. However, many of the advocates for Job's superior antiquity, perhaps the greatest number of them, have thought, there is not any allusion in the dialogue to any event about or after the departure from Egypt, or to any statute of the Mosaic code.—Nor, if I may presume to give my sentiments upon this subject, am I satisfied there is. In general, it is unreasonable, unless we are compelled by clear evidence, to suppose the author puts into the mouths of the speakers whom he introduces, thoughts unsuitable to the time in which they lived, and the more skilful and exact he appears to be in that sort of writing, it is in proportion more unreasonable; what then must be said, when the author of this book, who is allowed to be on the whole very cautious that his interlocutors talk in a way agreeable to their real circumstances and age, is represented at other times, to make them deviate from the notions and language thereof, in a manner the most palpable and gross, and easily detected; yea to do so with a frequency far beyond what any other writer instructed in the nature of such composition, can be charged with even in a work of greater length? This consideration itself must incline me to think there are not so many improprieties here as are supposed.—As to the instances that are pointed out, it would swell this note too much to examine them all. I will therefore only take notice of some which have been regarded as more decisive. Thus the parting of the Red sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh, have been said to be referred to, where Job says xxvi. 12. 'He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud;' for, say they, this last word רַבְּבָב *Rabbab*, is put to signify, the king of Egypt, or that country itself. But is this translation of the first clause, and exposition of the second at all certain? While some turn the former period, 'he stilleth, smootheeth, or calmeth the sea by his strength,' for which we may compare the use of the verb רָגַג *ragang* in Hiphil, Isai. xxxi. 2. xxxiv. 14. xlvii. 6. li. 4. Jerem. l. 24. Deut. xxviii. 65 and observe that they have the concurrence of the 70 with them, ἰσχυὶ καταπαύει τὴν θάλασσαν; others, as Mercer, Schultens, Taylor, understand it of his raising, agitating, and tossing the sea, in which way they also in-

ing God's readiness to execute vengeance on the wicked, and to rescue the good from oppression, and about

terpret *רָגַג* *ragag*, Isai. li. 13. Jerem. xxxi. 35. as they do the same word Job, vii. 6. of the beating or throbbing of a bile; The latter clause again, of God's smiting the proud, as the same word *רָבַב* *rabbab* is rendered Prov. xxviii. 25. Ps. ci. 5. Prov. xxi. 4. but is turned often elsewhere the large, the broad, they explain of God's subduing the swelling billows, or of his subduing the sea-monsters formidable by bulk or size: and as this gloss agrees to Ps. lxxxix. 10. so it is that of the 70. *Επιστημη τε ερωται το κητος*, and seems countenanced by Ps. lxxiv. 11. Isai. xxvii. 1. Besides from the very tenor of the chapter, there seems to be only a recital of God's general operations in the course of his providence designed, and not the mention of any singular interposition.—Again, it hath been said, there is an allusion to the Jewish law by which idolatry was punished with death, Job, xxxi. 26, 28. but, though it should be admitted, that this passage relates to the idolatrous worship of the sun and moon, as it is indeed the literal and obvious sense of the words, and not to the covetousness of gold and silver, or to the adulation of the great and powerful, one or other of which figurative explications the celebrated Schultens prefers, surely any worshipper of the true God, however unacquainted with any constitution or system of laws which made idolatry punishable with death by the civil magistrate, might be represented, without any trespass against the strict decorum of his age, to say that it was 'An iniquity of arbiters or judges,' Compare Deuteron. xxxii. 31. an iniquity deserving punishment from them; and indeed it must have drawn some punishment after it in the families of Abraham and Jacob, and other pious persons, unless we will say they suffered the breach of their own commands to keep the way of the Lord, and to put away strange gods, Gen. xviii. 19. xxxv. 2. to pass with impunity, instead of making the disobedient smart for it, for their own reformation, and the prevention of the crime in others. I forbear to mention that some understand the word in the singular number, and suppose the all-discerning judge in heaven to be here meant.—As to Job xxi. 19. again, where Job sayeth, 'God layeth up his (the wicked man's,) iniquity for his children,' what is there here to oblige us to think, there is a respect to God's threatening by Moses, that he would visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the chil-

following dispensations of providence towards the Israelites, whatever allusions may be to previous scrip-

turen, since it hath been believed by the heathens from the most antient times, that it was not unusual for divine vengeance to pursue children for the crimes of their parents? See Plutarch *De sera vindicta Numisæ*, and Aelian *Var. Histor.* 3. 43. as Cicero says, it was also the method of human governments from the earliest ages, to subject children to evils for the faults of their parents, that parents, from that affection which made them unwilling they should suffer, might be engaged to behave better; Cicero. *Epist. liber singul. ad Brutum* epist. 11. and 15.—In like manner, it hath been thought, there was a clear allusion to the law of Moses, when these faults are charged against Job, 'of taking a pledge from his brother for nought, and stripping the naked of their cloathing,' as the greatest enormities, Job, xxii. 6. and xxiv. 7, 9, 10. But does not every one see with what propriety such account might be made of these crimes, where was no acquaintance with the prohibition, Deut. xxiv. 10—13? the more that this does not guard against taking the raiment of the poor as a pledge for the payment of a loan, but only against its detention over-night, which is not here distinctly mentioned.—Once more it hath been asserted, there is a most incontestible allusion to God's special providence over the land of Judea as his own land, in these words of Elihu, where speaking of the clouds of rain, our translation has it, (as the 70) 'He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for many,' xxxvii. 13. the meaning of which is explained to be, 'He bringeth it at such junctures, and in such excess, as to cause dearth, (for correction,) or so timely and moderately as to cause plenty, (for mercy,) or lastly so tempered in a long continued course, as to produce that fertility of soil, which was to make one of the blessings of the promised land, (for his land,) a providence as distinct from the other two, of correction and mercy, as the *genus* is from the *species*.' But though I acknowledge, that the land of Canaan might be stiled God's land, by way of eminence, as it is Joel, ii. 18. Ezek. xxxvi. 20. Ps. x. 16. since God himself called it, My land, Jerem. ii. 7. xvi. 18. Ezek. xxxvi. 5. xxxviii. 6. Joel. i. 6. it does not follow, that this was here intended. The word we turn *land*, tho' it signify often a particular country, signifies also the earth in general; and the earth

tural † facts, which might have been learned by tradition.—Above all, they urge Job's great longevity or length of days; for he is said to have lived 140 years, after recovering his prosperous state with advantage, though he could not be less than fifty † or

might very well be denominated his, as it is Prov. viii. 31. 'I was rejoicing,' says Wisdom, 'in the habitable part of his (God's) earth,' with which compare Ps. xxiv. 1. Now, thus there will result a very good sense, and a sense against which there will not lie the objection of supposing the greatest benefit or advantage placed in the middle; 'He sends it either unseasonably and immoderately, (for correction,) or for the necessity of his earth, to supply what the common course of nature requires, to produce the ordinary increase for sustenance of man and beast, (for his earth,) or for causing extraordinary plenty and abundance, (for mercy or liberality,)' as indeed the word *רָחַם* *rahem* often denotes peculiar and unusual favour; but I must desist. In other instances which are brought of such indecuments in Job and the other speakers, while they are admitted to have been prior to Moses, a reader's own sagacity will shew him that they do not carry conviction with them.

† Such are reckoned to be to the history of the fall, Job, xii. 16: xxvi. 13. to the destruction of Sodom, Job, xx. 23, 26. xxxi. 33: See of others Dr. Sherlock's second Dissertation after his book on prophecy.

‡ A learned person hath represented Job to reproach his three friends as younger than himself, and hath observed, as their being so young is contrary to Elihu's account that they had gray hairs which awed him long to keep respectful silence, xxxii. 6, 7, 9. and to Eliphaz's assertion, xv. 10. there cannot be any truth in the history, but all must be a fiction. Vid. Joan. David Michaelis Not. ad Lowth Praelect. 32. p. 179. But for this there is no foundation, though indeed many have supposed Job's words, xxx. 1. to have been levelled against them as well as he. It is unreasonable so to interpret his words, when he is supposed not to be more advanced than in the text; he must mean, persons younger than himself among the lowest of the people despised him; for he adds, their fathers did not appear to him.

sixty years old at the arrival of his calamities. By consequence, he must have lived two hundred years or thereabouts, which is a measure of life more agreeable to the times of the postdiluvian patriarchs, than to those which succeeded; and indeed, even in the age of the later patriarchs after the flood, needed a peculiar blessing of heaven to secure it: for Abraham only lived 175 years, Jacob only 147, Joseph only 110, Levi only 137, and Moses only 120. So far back have most removed Job's age, even† of them who look upon the book which takes its denomination from him, as a far later production. Nor have some others among them, who have not raised him

worthy to be joined to his shepherd-dogs; and indeed it is incredible that a rich and illustrious person as Job was, would have chosen men of so low and mean extraction to be his friends.

† Thus Spanheim, who, after Jerome and Bochart, supposes Job a descendent from Nahor, Abraham's brother, in the country of Aulitis, makes the history of Job to have happened before the Israelites left Egypt, though he thinks the book was written by a Jewish prophet about the times of David or Solomon. So does Carpzovius, *Introduct. ad libros V. G. poeticos*, though he fancies the prophet Samuel was the person who prefixed to the book of Job the two first chapters, and also added the last, at least part of it. Mr. Heath, after Bp. Usher, places Job's exit fourteen years before the Israelites left Egypt, though he thinks the book was written during or after the captivity. The learned Dr Warburton proceeds upon the supposition, that Job was more antient than the Mosaic oeconomy and dispensation, though, rejecting their opinions who date the book either a little before, or during the continuance of this distress, he reckons it was written by Ezra himself, sometime between the return of the Jews from Babylon, and their thorough settlement in their own country. Finally, Mr. Costard, of Wadham college, while he imagines the book as recent a work as the age of the captivity, makes Job contemporary in the race of Nahor even with Isaac.

to so high antiquity, brought him down † much lower: after which I need scarce observe, that § they have

† Thus Grotius, who regards the book of Job as written for the consolation of Esau's descendents, when they were carried captive by the Babylonians, and who urges in behalf of this date, that many expressions are borrowed from the book of Psalms, as Job, xxi. 21, 24. from Ps. cvii. 40. Job, v, 16. and xxii. 19. from Ps. cvii. 42. Job, v, 18. from Ps. cxlvii. 3. (as if it could not be answered, that David rather borrowed from Job's book, supposing such a coincidence of thought and phrase between two sacred writers, could not happen without borrowing on either side.) makes the events related in the book to have happened while the Israelites sojourned in the desert.

§ Nevertheless I shall mention some of them, that it may appear what a concurrence there is about the great antiquity of Job himself. The famous Albert Schultens, who makes him a descendent of Abraham by Keturah, whose sons and grandsons for the greater part fixed their seats in Arabia Deserta, supposes Abraham was his grandfather, or great-grandfather, as may be found by his preface to his Comment. on the book of Job. So too Carpzovius, who makes the rest of the book a work of Moses's age. So also Huetius, Jo. Hen. Michaelis, and, to name no more foreigners, the author of the *Observationes Miscellaneae*, published at Amsterdam 1756, place Job before Moses. In the same manner among ourselves, Bishops Patrick, Sherlock, and Lowth, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Kennicot, who, if I mistake not, makes him a son of Esau, and the writers of the *Antient Univ. History*, who, although they make him a more remote descendent of Esau, still suppose him to have seen an end of all his sufferings before Moses left the land of Midian, the four generations on Esau's side having been shorter than those on Jacob's. In giving this high antiquity to Job, the Christian fathers had led the way, for Origen expressly calls him more antient than Moses, *advers. Cels. lib. 6. p. 305*. Eusebius pronounces, *Dem. Evan. lib. 1. cap. 6. p. 14.* that he was two complete ages before Moses, being the fifth from Abraham, whereas Moses was the seventh; yea, he introduces him in his catalogue of God's favourites before Joseph, while at the same time he denies him to be of Jewish race, *Praep. Ev. lib. 7. c. 8. p. 300.* as indeed Leontius, a writer about the year 600, tells us some supposed Joseph the author of the book of Job,

placed him at that great distance from us with one consent, who have dated the composition of the piece about Moses's time, however they have differed in sentiment, first about his parentage, whether he was sprung from Nahor or from Abraham, and if from him, whether by Keturah, or by Hagar, or by Sarah in the line of Esau; and then about the precise era of his nativity and death, whether they were more or less anterior to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. It may then seem most likely, from the arguments mentioned, as indeed they are allowed to have so much force very generally by the learned, that the history recorded in this book happened before the exod, and the promulgation of the law. It is true Josephus must be confessed to be against us here. For, having said, 'That there were with his nation twenty-two books, containing the history of all time, which have been justly believed * to be divine, and that of these, five are Moses's, which comprehend both the laws and the account of the † ge-

which they could not do, without placing him more early, De Sessia, Act. 2. Nor do the Jewish doctors disagree in general, for in their *Seder Olam Rabbah* or Great Chronicle, they place his death before the exod, cap. 3. and many of them judge him to have flourished in the times of Isaac and Jacob, as one of Nahor's grand-children, who was Abraham's brother. Selden de Jure Nat. et Gentium, lib. 7. cap. 11. p. 881.

* *Contra Apion*, lib. 1. sect. 8.—Τὰ δὲ διὰ θεοῦ πιστευόμενα. This, by the by, shews the groundlessness of Dr. Middleton's remark, that Josephus only speaks of Moses's being under a divine guidance, where the same is affirmed by himself in the course of his history. See Part 1. sect. 2. p. 7.

† Καὶ τὴν τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος παράδοσιν. Dr. Hudson's version

‘neration of men until his death,’ he adds, ‘But from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes the king of the Persians after Xerxes, the prophets after Moses wrote the things done in their own *time in thirteen books; from which it follows, as we have said, if he included the book of Job among the books of the prophets, that he must have placed his life, and the occurrences of it after Moses’s death. But is it not reasonable to make the considerations offered in support of Job’s superior antiquity to Moses, overballance the authority of Josephus’s judgment in the matter, who wrote so long after?’

is, ‘The series of events from the creation, *seriem rerum gestarum a conditu humani generis.*’

* The words are quoted above, Part I. sect. 6. p. 33. 34. A doubt indeed hath arisen in my mind, whether *κατ’ αὐτοῦ* is properly translated, ‘in their own time,’ though it be the common version, partly because I do not observe such a sense of this preposition with the accusative marked by lexicographers, and partly because it could not be Josephus’s intention to say each of the prophets after Moses wrote the occurrences of his own time; for we cannot suppose that the one person who wrote the book of Judges, was contemporary with all those persons whose achievements and fortune he records, or that the prophet who wrote the two books of Kings, lived through all the successive reigns the affairs whereof he relates. So that they who give this sense must maintain, it was only his design to declare, that the prophets in the whole wrote the transactions of that long interval from Moses’s death till Artaxerxes’s reign, during some part of which interval, one or other of them lived. But though we should turn *κατ’ αὐτοῦ* otherwise, still the natural meaning will be, that those prophets wrote only of persons and things that followed Moses’s death, which will bring Job’s history according to him within that period. Nor can it be justly deemed an objection to the truth of Josephus’s representation about their subject, that we have by one of them in the beginning of the first book of Chronicles, a table of the genealogies of men even from Adam, who was more than 2400 years before Moses.

Though there are Arabic terms in the book of Job, it is not an Hebrew translation of an Arabic original.

It being shewed there is a greater probability that Job lived in the patriarchal times, let us now consider Mr. Voltaire's assertion, ' That the book of Job ' was certainly wrote in Arabic, because it contains ' several Arabic terms, wherefore the copy in our ' Hebrew bibles is no more than an Hebrew translation of it.' But what appearance is there, that the Hebrew copy we have of this book, is a version at all? That this hath been asserted by some, cannot indeed be denied. Perhaps, however, the assertion had its rise from the addition at the end of the Greek translation of Job, because the preface, with which the story above quoted from it, concerning Job's antecedent name, extraction, marriage, residence and kingdom, is thus introduced, ' This is interpreted ' from a Syriac book,' was understood, not as it should have been, to relate to that account annexed, but to extend to the whole book, and to signify that it had been taken from a Syriac book; nor this a version, but an original*. But, to whatever cause the assertion may have been owing, the opinion on which it proceeds is at present very generally exploded as

* With these words, ' And Job died, being old and full of days,' xlii. 17. the Hebrew ended of old, as it does still; and so did Aquila and Symmachus conclude their versions. But in the 70, and Theodotion's versions, these words were added, after ' But it hath been ' written, that he shall rise again with those whom God raiseth up,' ὅτις ἐρμηνεύεται ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς Βίβλου, ἐν μὲν γῇ κατοικῶν τῇ Αὐστρίδι, and what follows, as before rendered, page 413.

a groundless one: (I may not say * universally, because I apprehend some restriction needful;) and there is the greatest reason for such treatment of it, for the book hath the air and cast of an original Hebrew composition through its whole frame and contexture. This is evident concerning the two first chapters, which constitute the narrative of Job's misfortunes, and concerning the eleven verses at the end, which declare the happy change and alteration of his circumstances till he went down into the grave; insomuch, that even they have looked upon them to be originally the production of a Jewish prophet in his own language, when the book was received into the canon of his church, who are most zealous for deriving the † rest of the book from a stran-

* So however the authors of the Antient Univ. History, 3. 353. 'Tho' some learned men have thought it (the book of Job) to have been written originally in Syriac, or Arabic, either by Job himself, or by one of his friends; yet it is now universally allowed to have been written in Hebrew.' Yet they add, 'What has given rise to the former notion, is its being so blended with Syriac and Arabic expressions and idioms, as makes it very difficult to be rightly understood.'

† It hath been admitted by them who supposed the rest of the book, as we have it, a translation of an Arabic work by Job himself, or one of his friends. For in these portions is pure Hebrew, free from all such Syriacisms, Chaldaisms, Arabisms, as have been thought to be in other places. Besides, not to repeat what was said about the fitness of the description of Job's situation, from the pen of a Jew in Canaan, as it is i. 3. they have insisted much on the very frequent use here of the name *Jehovah*, by us turned the *Lord*, in capital letters, as indeed it occurs 28 times, while it is never in the mouth of any speaker thro' the whole dialogue, but once in that of Job, xii. 9. or at most twice, if the reading of the 5 Oxford MSS. and of the Cambridge one, be more genuine than that of our printed copies, which give *Adonai*, Job xxviii. 28. And it is but 5 times in the transitions from one interlocutor to

ger. As to the intermediate part again, from these words of Job, 'Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, A man-child is conceived,' iii. 1. until these others, 'Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes,' xlii. 6. the style is indeed different; for, whereas the former portions of the book are prose, this, which lies between them, is in measure and verse, as was long since observed by † Jerome, who hath been herein followed by other critics; and, whereas there the style is simple and unadorned, here it is elevated and embellished. But still the verse or metre is just such as is found in other writings of that kind originally Hebrew; for there is the same peculiar conformation of sentences in respect of similar length and cadence, and, I may add, import, the latter period being commonly either parallel or contradictory to the former; also, the same force and energy of language, the same loftiness and sublimity of thought, the same boldness of imagery and comparisons which are perceptible in them. Wherefore this, like them, hath also a certain lustre and shine of poetry through the medium of a translation. In a word, it seems composed according to the same rules and restraints.—Nor is there to be discerned any thing of that con-

to another, xxxviii. 1. xl. 1, 3, 6. xlii. 1. For say they, this so common and familiar use of the term *Jehovah*, in the narrative of Job's troubles and deliverance, while it is so rare elsewhere, clearly indicates the author thereof to have been a Jew after God had assumed that name at his commission to Moses, Exod. iii. vi.

† Vid. Praef. in Jobi librum. More shortly in his Letter to Paulinus, he says, 'Prosa incipit, versu labitur, pedestri sermone finitur.' Tom. 3. Op. pp. 7. 8.

straint, any thing of that loss, at least, diminution of the brilliancy and splendor of figures, or like faults which mark and characterize a version in contradistinction to its archetype, or the primitive work which it copies.

But says Mr. Voltaire, ‘ There are Arabic terms in it, therefore the book was written in Arabic.’ And at this rate, it should also have been written in Syriac; for there are Syriac terms in it, say some. And in Chaldaic; for there are Chaldaic terms in it, say others. Ill-fated book of Job, to be in this manner distracted and pulled different ways at once, with relation to thy native language! But there is no force in such premises to justify the conclusion. How indeed can there be, when, as the ingenious and learned Dr† Lowth hath observed, poetry hath always been indulged in the use of foreign words, and of certain anomalies, that is, forms of received words somewhat varied and altered from the analogy and laws of language; as must occur to every scholar who thinks of Homer, and other writers in this way among the Greeks. Besides, when we admit there are Arabic terms here, it is only necessary to admit it in this sense, that there are words in the dialogue of the book which are to be met with nowhere else in the bible, but are only to be found in some of the numerous Arabic volumes that are transmitted to us, or in dictionaries formed thereon. They might however have been common in the age when Job lived, both to Jews and Arabians. For it is agreed by persons of skill and learning on this point, that the Hebrew and Arabic are not different languages, but different

† See Praelect. 3. on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews.

dialects of the same primaeval language: wherefore, if there is such a harmony and coincidence between the Hebrew, as it is preserved in the bible, and the Arabic, as it is exhibited in writings of far posterior date, as is almost incredible to them who are uninitiated in both, there must have been a greater resemblance and sameness between them, the nearer those who used them in succeeding ages were to their union * in Heber, as their common parent or progenitor, whatever diversities may have crept in gradually afterwards, in respect of the use or disuse of the same vocables, and in respect of circumstantial things about those that were mutually retained. It will then still less follow from the appearance of Arabic terms in the book of Job, as the sense of the expression is now explained, that it was written originally in Arabic, and that the Hebrew copy is only a translation, as may be shortly shewed, whatever hypothesis we embrace about the age of that composition.

The imagination indeed is excluded by their scheme itself, who make the book to have been written in its present dress, upon some traditional oral accounts, concerning one Job in the patriarchal times, an eminently good man, who had suffered extraordinary afflictions for the trial of his virtue, and been conspicuously rewarded for his patience under them, whether they date it soon after

* I mention Heber, because from him the posterity of Joktan in Arabia were derived, Gen. x. 26. 1 Chron. i. 19. The other inhabitants thereof were, I think, sprung from Nahor, Abraham's grandfather, and from Abraham himself, by Hagar or Keturah; and therefore were not so early separated from a general ancestor or head, in whom they were combined with the Jews.

the commencement of the regal government in Israel, or whether they date it about the æra of the Babylonish captivity *. Accordingly, Dr. Warburton, the great patron and advocate of this last date of the work, who, consistently, will not allow the fre-

* As the friends of the hypothesis, which assigns the book one or other of these dates, do, or may insist, in common, on allusions through the dialogue to the miraculous procedure of God at the Red Sea; and to the Jewish statutes against idolatry, and against taking a pledge from the poor, with the threatening annexed to the second command in the decalogue; and to the peculiar care of God over Canaan; and to the passages in the Psalms, of which already, page 425. So they also do, or may, jointly urge, in support of it, allusions to the Egyptian darkness, Job ix. 7. and to the death of the first born there, xxxiv. 20. and to the exclusive partition of the land of Canaan among the Israelites, xv. 19. Some of them do likewise remark the position of the book after Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew Bibles, and in the lists of the canonical books given us in Bava Bathra, and other Jewish writings; and the observation in the narrative with which the book concludes, xlii. 15. 'Job gave his three daughters inheritance among 'their brethren,' which never would have been made, they say, but for the contrary regulation of the Jewish law already established, which decreed that the paternal inheritance should pass to sons wholly, where such were in life, as in the case of Job's daughters, Numb. xxvii. 6, 11. And Dr. Warburton, with others who bring the book as low as he does, urge as arguments in behalf of their opinion, references in Elihu's discourse to Hezekiah's disease and recovery, xxxiv. 17,—26. to Manasseh's humiliation and penitence, xxxvi. 7, 8, 9. to Amon's assassination by his servants, when he did not take warning by his father's punishment, xxxvi. 12. They take notice of the expression in the historical part for God's deliverance of Job from his miseries, xlii. 10. 'The Lord turned the captivity of Job,' as a hint of the Babylonish captivity. They tell us, that the word *Satan* is only employed about the times of the captivity, for the prince of fallen angels. And they represent the phrase, xxxi. 36. as an allusion to the phylacteries, the wearing of which about the head, was not, before that æra, introduced.

quent use of the Arabic dialect to be insisted on as a proof of its high and remote original, regards it only as an evidence of the ability of the writer to give his dramatic fable such an air of antiquity and verisimilitude as he chose, by making the Arabians introduced express their sentiments, as persons living in their times would have done; though he allows, that by suffering some indecorums † or improprieties to creep in, in some other articles, he hath betrayed his own times and country. If, therefore, we embrace the hypothesis which fixes one or other of these greatly posterior dates of the book to Job's age, we need not be straitened to account for what have been called Arabisms in it, however little it can be pretended there was any connection and intercourse

† Some of these indecorums which they mention, may be learned from the preceding note. They also reckon the putting Jehovah into the mouth of Job the Arabian, xii. 9. and perhaps xxviii. 28. as another of these improprieties. This, however, must depend upon this question, whether that name of God was altogether unknown till God sent Moses to deliver Israel. Exodus iii. 15. vi. 2, 3. Now that is far from being a certain point, as we find it used by Moses in the preceding history, not only when he relates facts himself, in which he might be supposed to accommodate his style concerning God, to the manners of his own age, but even where he introduces God addressing men, and men again speaking unto, or about God, and denominating places from him in more ancient times, as Gen. xv. 2, 7, 8. xxii. 14. xxvi. 22, 28, 29. xxviii. 13, 16. For in all these passages, the Lord is, in the original, Jehovah. On this account God may seem to intend saying, Exod. vi. 2. 3. not that he then would be called by a name formerly unheard, but that he would act suitably to its import, by discovering his immutability in the fulfilment of his promises. It was before observed, that this name of God was familiar to Balaam of Mesopotamia; but this transaction is placed by chronologers so late as the fortieth year after the exod.

between Arabians and Jews, which would taint the Hebrew language with Arabic terms and idioms, in either of these periods of the Jewish state.

On the other hand, if we adopt their hypothesis, who make the book of Job a more antient writing by Moses, or by Job himself, as * many do, because they do not acknowledge the truth of the observations made by the friends of the former scheme, or,

* Who those are may be seen in part from Note p. 425. and they do, or may observe these things by way of reply to the arguments before produced. That the rule followed in the arrangement of the Sacred Books, is not the order of time in which they were written, as must be admitted by those who suppose the book of Job written, either under the regal government in Israel, or about the captivity; for Job's book is prefixed to Ruth, and Jeremiah's Lamentations are placed before Ecclesiastes, both in the Hebrew Bible and in Jewish lists of the canonical scriptures.—That the historian might have related the fact as he does Job, xlii. 15. to shew Job's equity of distribution unto his children, though no such law had been enacted by Moses as that supposed to be referred unto; more especially, if it was, as some have thought, an antient custom in Arabia, to give daughters as well as sons a share or determinate part of their father's possessions, as indeed Mahomet hath established the rule in his Coran, chap. iv.—That these allusions in the dialogue, which have been mentioned, are many of them evidently the suggestions of mere arbitrary fancy and imagination, and even these of them which have been pointed out with the greatest plausibility, are after all very uncertain. For might not a writer have made the interlocutors express themselves as they do, tho' he had not heard of such events in the Jewish history, as are supposed to have given rise to the passages respectively? See Note p. 420. That the phrase, of God's turning a man's captivity, in the last chapter, might have been applied to his reparation of his ruined fortunes, as soon as any captives were released and set at liberty in the world, which happened even in Abraham's days.—That Satan is the name applied to the wicked spirit in the sixth Psalm, according to the common opinion, as indeed the 70 turn the Hebrew term there by the word *Διαβολος*, which is also their ver-

where they confess the truth of them, do not admit the justice of their reasoning from them, it will be

sion of the same, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Job, i. ii. and Zechariah, iii. 1, 2. where the patrons of the latest date of Job's book allow the prince of fallen angels to be intended. However, though no example could be produced of such use of it prior to the times of the captivity, from a book of so small size as the more early scriptures, where little mention is made of evil spirits, it would be rash to affirm, the word which signifies an enemy in general, was never before employed to mark him out among the Jews, when it had such an aptitude to signify him by way of eminence, who is the great adversary of the honour of God, and the happiness of men.—In particular, it hath been urged against them who bring the book so low as the captivity, and make the ground of it mere traditionary accounts of Job's character, circumstances, and behaviour, who lived in the patriarchal times, that these accounts must at so great a distance as 1000 years, have appeared of too uncertain credit to be the foundation of such a superstructure as is here, and of such veneration for Job as the declaration in Ezekiel's prophecy supposes.—That there is no likelihood the book was written for the end assigned, for what tendency could it have, either to comfort the Jews under their removal to Babylon, and their hardships there, since they were subjected to it for their idolatry and other crimes, (as were the Edomites,) Dan. ix. 4—13. Ezra, ix. 6. 7. or to solace them after they came back to their own country cured of their biases to serve false gods, under their injurious treatment by their neighbours there? since they were then chargeable with general and flagrant offences against their law by intermarriages with heathens, by exaction of usury from their brethren, by violation of the sabbath, and by neglect of the house of God, and of the instituted services of worship in it, as appears from Ezra, ix. 1. x. 1. Nehem. v. 13. ix. 1. &c. xiii. throughout, and the reproaches of God's prophets Haggai, Malachi, and Zechariah, in that period.—Nor surely were the Jews to learn then only, that though good they might be unfortunate, and though wicked they might be prosperous. Dr. Lowth hath also observed, that Ezra's stile, to whom this book hath been ascribed by some, who date it so late as the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity into their own land, is very different from that of the historical narrative at its beginning and end.

easy to shew, that the consequence does not hold from our finding Arabic words in our Hebrew book of Job, to its being a version of an Arabic original.

Do we suppose it a work of Moses, amidst his greater leisure in the land of Midian, built upon most authentic accounts which he had received of Job's character and condition? and indeed this hath been a very common * opinion both among Jews and Christians.

* It hath been reckoned the most common, although Josephus did not look upon it as a composition of Moses. To this purpose speak the authors of the *Antient Universal History*; for they say, 'it hath been attributed to Moses by the majority of learned men,' and add, 'That his poetic genius was equal to this excellent performance, those few canticles he has left us in the Pentateuch will not permit us to doubt,' though at the same time they seem to have thought another wrote the three or four last verses of the book, which give an account of Job's death and numerous posterity, as they did not suppose Moses to have outlived him so long, as to be able to relate these facts, vol. 3. p. 353. Nor is there perhaps any exaggeration in their assertion. It is the sense of the Talmudists in *Bava Bathra*, and of David Kimchi with many other Rabbis; it is the judgment of several Christian fathers, as of Methodius, of the authors of the commentaries on Job, commonly ascribed to Origen, of Jerome, &c. it is the opinion of Huetius, bishop Patrick, Schmidius, the present learned bishop of Oxford, the author of *Observationes Miscellaneae in Jobum*, &c. And the favourers of it do, or may observe, that there is a great agreement in style between the prose parts of this book, and the prose parts of his acknowledged books, and between the poetical parts of this book, and the songs and predictions which he hath recorded through the Pentateuch; or if there is any difference, there is none but what may be accounted for by his writing them in different periods of life, in one of which the imagination was more warm and lively, but in the other its heat and vivacity were abated.—That Job an Arabian, might be described by a writer in Midian, as well as a writer in Canaan, as a man of the east, because Arabia lay on the east of the former, as well as of the latter.—That the separation of it from Moses's allowed works in the Bible, is

Whether it was composed by him to * teach the Israelites patience under the miseries of their servitude and oppression under the Egyptians, and to solace them with hope of deliverance, or whether † it was framed by him to inculcate that great truth, that no evidence he was not the writer of it; for, not to mention that in one ancient catalogue, I mean that of Jerome's letter to Paulinus, (of which before, Part 1. sect. 6. pp. 32. 33.) the book of Job is mentioned next after the five books of Moses, we find books are separated from one another in the order of arrangement which had the same author. Thus in the Hebrew bible and in Jewish lists, the book of Job is placed between the Proverbs and the Song; Ruth and Lamentations again intervene between the Song and Ecclesiastes; yet Proverbs, Song, and Ecclesiastes are the works of Solomon; Ruth and Lamentations are the production of persons very distant in age from him, as well as from one another.

* This hath been generally believed the design of it by them who attribute it to Moses, and the person who writes the commentaries upon this book under the name of Origen, tells us he found such an account of its view in the sayings of the ancients. See Patrick's preface 8vo. pp. 17, 18. where a long story of this kind is quoted thence, and in support of it it may be said, If Job an upright worshipper of God was so patient under his troubles, it much more became the Israelites to acquiesce in their sufferings under the tyranny of Pharaoh, who were tainted with the idolatries and other vices of Egypt.——Further, tho' they could not with reason entertain hopes of deliverance and redemption, from Job's recovery to a prosperous state in itself considered, because their character was far different from his; yet such an instance of divine interposition in his behalf, criminal as their behaviour was, might strengthen their expectations, that he would extend mercy to them also, as it was a blessing promised in his covenant with Abraham.

† This is suggested by Bp Sherlock in his Second Dissertation, where indeed as will be afterwards observed. he supposes the book to be written by a different person from Moses, and more ancient. Suitably, Satan the evil being is represented there unable to afflict Job, till he hath God's allowance; and Job adores God there as the supreme Lord and Sovereign, by whose direction all his distresses and losses befell him.

there was one supreme ruler of the universe, by whose will all calamity, as well as all prosperity happened, in opposition to the very antient error of two independent and coordinate principles, the one the author of all good, the other the author of all evil, is not material here. Upon this supposition, that it is a production of Moses, it cannot seem strange, that there should be words or forms of words in it, which † though then in use among, or known to his countrymen, afterwards fell into disuse, so that they are only to be read in Arabic pieces, and not in the other books of the Bible, as indeed in some of them also, there are words in vain searched for through it any where else.

Again, do we suppose it, as some of distinguished fame for oriental learning * have done, a composition

† If any should incline to think Moses had any assistance in this work by written memoirs in the Arabic dialect, the same being formed before that time, in contradistinction to the Hebrew, he may account for the Arabic terms by their occurrence in them, while yet they were not unintelligible to the Israelites.

* This was the opinion of the celebrated Albert Schultens, a very able judge in eastern writings, with regard to that part of the book which reaches from the iii. chapter to the 6 verse of the xlii. as may be seen in his preface; of Cocceius likewise, and Carpzovius, and Hinkelmann, and, if I mistake not, of Golius, and Walton, and Bochart, as it was that of Suidas of old. To this also, Bishop Sherlock seems to have inclined, who says, there is all the appearance that can arise from internal characters, that it was written before any of the books of Moses; wherefore he considers its testimony to religious doctrine, as distinct from the authority of Moses. And in favour of this opinion, it hath been, or may be remarked, it seems very reasonable to suppose that Job, in some of his happy and unmolested years, wrote the piece. For who could be better prepared to transmit to posterity an account of the discourses of himself and his friends, and of the address of the Almighty upon the occasion, than he who was always present at, and bore so great

of Job himself, in the same language in which it is now extant? I mean this with exception of the introduction and conclusion, which appear rather to have been written by a Jewish prophet, when it was admitted into the canon of his church, (whether it was Moses, or Samuel, or another, is not important) on account of the difference of stile therein, and in particular the frequent use of the name *Jehovah*, the impropriety of Job's recording his own praises, and the impossibility of his giving a relation of his own death. In this case, it seems very natural that there should be Arabisms in it, or terms and modes of speech, occurring in no other part of the Bible, but found among Arabian authors. They might be, in Job's age, common to all the posterity of Heber, but become afterwards obsolete in the Jewish branch, at least not appear

a share in the original dialogue? And who again could be better disposed to edify mankind by the relation in future ages, than he who so eminently revered God, and must have been very solicitous to promote his honour and glory in the world? Further, hath not the piece itself, the air and appearance of being penned by one who was an agent in the scene? Doth it not carry the stamp and impression of such a hand in these ardent affections, these daring expressions, which are observable through it? And if Job wrote the same, why should it be thought he wrote it in another language, so that we have only a translation of his composition, when there is no reason to suppose the language of Abraham's posterity by Jacob, and of the inhabitants of Arabia from the same stock with them, was, in that early period, so different, that they would be unintelligible to one another; and when there does not appear any such want of emphasis and force, or of dignity and majesty, or of grace and beauty, as points out a version? Are not the names which Job gave his daughters, Hebrew? And why should any fancy Job called his children by words of the Hebrew language, but spoke in common life, or wrote, in a language quite distinct, which could not be comprehended by them that used that?

in another part of the Bible, (the only book extant in the Hebrew dialect, and comparatively of very small size,) while they continued in the Arab line, and therefore are found in their more † voluminous writings.

It does not then follow, upon the supposition of the so remote antiquity of the book, because there are Arabic terms in the book of Job, that it was originally written in the Arabic language, as it now stands, and only translated into Hebrew. To argue thus, upon this scheme, † is very absurd; and the absurdity

† It is the same thing in effect as to the explication of these Arabisms, if Elihu be made the writer of it as he is by Dr. Lightfoot, who also thinks Job's time fell in with the servitude of Israel in Egypt. This notion he builds partly on the silence about him, chap. ii. 11. partly on his speaking of himself as the historian, xxxii. 15, 16, 17. Works, vol. 1. p. 23. This last however cannot be justly said of him more than of others, for he only there recites his words in the first person as before, ver. 6. 7. which also the former speakers sometimes did, Job, ix. 22. xxvii. 11, 12.

† An objection hath been made to this early date of Job's book, that there are many Chaldaisms in it, of which sort are reckoned the terminations of words plural in *'im*, instead of *'im*. For it hath been hence inferred, that it was written about the time of the captivity, when the purity of the language of the Jews became tainted by intercourse with the Chaldeans. But says Mr. Schultens, how can it be made appear that they are Chaldean idioms, and not genuine Hebrew modes of speech of the most antient and venerable stamp? Such plural terminations are found elsewhere, as Prov. xxxi. 3. and Ezek. xxvi. 18. It hath been also urged, I know, against giving this poetical piece so great antiquity as the age of Moses or Job, that there is mention in it of writing upon lead, Job xix. 24. For this they pretend must be the sense, as, indeed, it is that which the Vulgate version exhibits, lead being too soft a substance for graving letters upon a rock, especially unto perpetuity. But lead, they add, was not in use for writing upon, till far posterior times. It may, however, be answered, 'tis true, lead was not the first materials that were employed for this purpose, it only suc-

of it may perhaps be rendered more striking to many readers in this manner. Let us take for granted, that the Welch and Galic are only different dialects of the old Celtic tongue, derived from it as two streams from the same fountain; and let us imagine that the writings preserved in the Welch are far more numerous than those which are conveyed down in the Galic: what a poor argument would it

ceeded in such use of it, to palm leaves, and barks of trees. For says Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. 13. cap. 41. 'Olim in palmarum foliis scriptitatum et libris quarundam arborum: postea publica monumenta plumbeis voluminibus, mox et privata linxteis confici coepta, aut ceris. Pugillarum enim usum fuisse etiam ante Trojana tempesta invenimus apud Homerum.' Nevertheless, if its use was introduced according to this order, it must have been very antient. Agreeably, Pausanias, who flourished under Adrian, about 117 years after Christ, says, he saw in Boeotia, Hesiod's poem of the *Εργα*, or Labours, written on lead; but many parts of it effaced, or greatly injured by time. Lib. 9. cap. 31. pag. 771. *Και μοι μολυβδον εδεικνυσεν—τα πολλα υπο τη χρονω λευμασμενα γεγραπται δε αυτω τα εργα.* And he adds, 'He was told Hesiod left this poem in writing without the invocation of the muses then prefixed to it,' as it is indeed still; a circumstance very observable! But without pretending to assert that it was a practice in Job's time, to imprint characters upon leaden tables, it does not seem to me that such is the necessary, or even probable, sense of the passage. For if the matter, on which the words were to be written, had been designed, it would have been *בַּעֲפֶרֶת* *Bagnephereth*, as it is afterward *בַּצֹּר* *batzur*, in the rock, instead of *וּבַעֲפֶרֶת* *vegnephereth*, which, from the connection wherein it stands, points out something which was to be used like iron in marking the words, rather than the substance, upon which they were to be written. We may therefore say, lead being too pliable a substance for being used as a *style*, or instrument of writing on a rock, that lead to be melted and poured into the characters cut in the rock by the iron style, that the same might be more conspicuous and legible, is there meant. So Bochart Hieroz. lib. 2. c. 44. page 466. and R. Salomo have explained it.

be to persuade us, that an old Galic piece was first written in Welch, and afterwards translated from the original Welch, that some vocables, or constructions, to be met with in it, are not to be seen in any other of the few Galic productions which are handed down to our times, but only in the more various and large Welch compositions? In like manner let us assume it, that the French and German have the same relation of dialects to the Latin tongue; and that authors have composed in the French in far greater number, and upon much greater diversity of subjects, than in the German: how lame and insufficient a proof would it be, that an antient German book was merely a version of a French original, that some terms mentioned in it are not found in any other of the (by supposition) few German works that are extant, but only in the more extensive French writings? Every one must perceive, upon the slightest reflection, that such words might belong to the mother languages respectively, the Celtic and Latin, and be, in the succession of ages, lost in one dialect thence formed, but be continued in the other thro' accidental causes. For indeed the more we go back in the examination of different dialects of the same tongue, and the nearer we come to that period when the progenitors of those who use them had one speech, there is always the greater similarity and agreement in the sounds that are significant of their ideas. Whereas, the farther we ascend in our investigation of different languages, we discover always the lesser likeness and coincidence of phrase and diction *. Now

* This hath been observed to be the case of the French and English; and agreeably, it hath been taken notice of, that the more antient En-

all this applies to the book of Job, the Hebrew and Arabic being only two dialects of the same primæval language, and the books written in the former, being inconsiderable for size and number, in comparison of those we have in the latter. It is then equally foolish to conclude, because there are words here no where else found in the Hebrew volume, but occurring in Arabian works, that the book of Job was an Arabian composition at first, and that our Hebrew copy is only a translation of it.

So much for vindicating the book of Job against Mr. Voltaire's reflection, upon the various hypotheses which learned men have embraced about its age and author; for this method I have rather chosen, than to decide among the contending parties. It is a book written with much loftiness of style and expression, on account of which it hath excited the wonder of every past age, and will in like manner raise the admiration of every succeeding one. What grand descriptions† have we here, through the course of the dispute between Job and his friends, whether adversity is a proof of God's wrath and displeasure in this world, and through the series of the divine applica-

glish books have fewer words of a French extraction and derivation in them.

† Yet we should take heed we do not build religious doctrines on this or that assertion of the humane interlocutors, except so far as the same is consonant to the dictates of reason, or confirmed by passages of speakers or writers inspired, seeing God himself censured them. Is it not evident Job's friends were mistaken, in supposing that great afflictions were a demonstration of great crimes.—That the worldly prosperity of sinners, where it takes place, always soon ceases, so as to reveal their iniquity to men? &c.

tion to Job, of the perfections, and works, and measures of Deity! What excellent delineations do we meet with through the human dialogue of the virtues and vices of men! While again in the historical relation at the beginning of the book, we behold a signal instance of God's visiting a man, even with unusual and sore afflictions, not for the punishment of his sins, but for the trial and display of the truth and strength of his religion; and a striking pattern of dutiful submission under these calamities, unexpected as they were in their arrival, and immediate as they were in their succession to one another. And then in the narrative at the end, we see an illustrious example of the divine interposition to vindicate traduced innocence, and crown distressed virtue even upon earth with a happy deliverance, and transcendent prosperity.

SECTION IV.

Of his reflections, in his Philosophical Dictionary, against the genuineness of Solomon's writings.

MR. VOLTAIRE, in his Philosophical Dictionary, under the article Solomon, * proposes this question with a great air of confidence, that the point which he aims to deny by it, cannot be maintained: I mean that the books which the Jews ascribe to Solomon, really belong to him. 'Is this same wise Solomon really author, says he, of the works fathered on him?' And then he goes on to attack each

* Page 327.—330.

of them distinctly. This passage, therefore, must be considered by us.

Of his reflections against the Song of Songs.

HE begins with the Song. ‘Is it likely, for instance, he asks, that the Jewish eclogue called the Song of Songs, is of his writing?’ And hereon he argues, through almost two pages, against its being his composition, from the improbability and unnaturalness, as he thinks, of some actions and addresses described in it, together with the unsuitableness and indelicacy of certain images used there. His reasoning, which I think in justice I ought to quote, though somewhat long, runs thus,

‘A monarch, who had a thousand mistresses, may have said to one of these charmers, Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, for thy breasts are better than wine. A king and a shepherd amidst such amorous endearments may very naturally talk alike: but it is something odd, that it is the girl who is made to talk thus wantonly about kisses and her sweet-heart’s breasts.

‘I likewise will not deny but a courtly prince may make his mistress say, My husband is like a cluster of myrrh, he shall lye all night betwixt my breasts. A cluster of myrrh is to me something obscure; but I very well understand the charmer’s meaning, when she bids her beloved lay his left hand over her neck, and embrace her with his right.

‘There are some expressions in which the author’s elucidation is wanted, as when he says, Your navel is like a goblet in which there is always something

• to drink; your belly is like a bushel of wheat; your
• breasts are like two young roes; your nose is as the
• tower of Lebanon.

• This I own is not the stile of Virgil's Eclogues;
• but all have not a like stile, and a Jew is not oblig-
• ed to write like Virgil.

• I suppose it may likewise be another beautiful
• strain of eastern eloquence to say, Our sister is yet
• little; she has no breasts; what shall we do for our
• sister? If she be a wall, let us build on her; if a
• door, let us shut her.

• We will allow that such words might have e-
• scaped Solomon, though the wisest of men, in a
• merry mood. This composition is said to be an e-
• pithalamium on his marriage with Pharaoh's
• daughter: but is it natural that Pharaoh's son-in-
• law should leave his beloved in the night, to go
• and faunter in his walnut-yard; and that the queen
• should run after him bare-footed? that the city
• watch should beat her and take her gown from
• her?

• Could a king's daughter have said, I am brown,
• yet I am beautiful like Solomon's furs. Such ex-
• pressions might be overlooked in a home-spun
• swain; though, after all, there can be little affinity
• between furs and a girl's beauty. Well, but Solo-
• mon's furs might be exceedingly admired in their
• time; and for a low-liv'd Jew in a lay to his sweet-
• heart, to tell her in his Jewish gibberish, that never
• any Jewish king had such fine furred gowns as her
• dear self, was not at all out of character; but Solo-
• mon must have been strangely infatuated with his
• furs to compare them to his mistress. Were a

‘king in our times to write such an epithalamium
 ‘on his marriage with a neighbouring monarch’s
 ‘daughter, he would forfeit all title to the lau-
 ‘rel †.’

But, without entering here into disquisitions ei-
 ther about the intention of this piece, or about its
 divine * authority (these being foreign to my plan); is
 it not reasonable, in matters of this kind, to make
 allowance for difference of times † and manners? It

‡ Page 327, 328. * See Part I. sect. VI. page 34, 35.

† This observation opens the general solution of the difficulties
 which arise from the instances he produces, supposing them all just;
 even as it suggests the true apology for bolder figurative descriptions
 than any here, in Ezek. xvi. and xxiii. chapters, which offend us who
 are accustomed to greater reserve of speech, by the rules which good
 breeding prescribes, on account of the promiscuous society and con-
 versation of the sexes that prevails in these countries, than those are
 who live in the east, where the same intercourse does not take place.
 And it is necessary often to have recourse to the same principle for de-
 fending antient writers, the most admired for the elegance and beauty
 of their compositions. How otherwise shall we vindicate Theocritus,
 that celebrated pastoral poet among the Greeks, when he makes twelve
 principal young ladies of the town of Sparta, in their song before the
 nuptial chamber of Menelaus and Helen, first liken her, that they may
 extol her excellence, to a furrōw which shoots beyond the rest in a
 field, and to a cypress tree in a garden; and then compare her, with
 the same view, to a Thessalian horse in a chariot? Idyl. xviii. 30, 31.

— η ἄρματι Θεσσαλος ἵππος

Ὡς καὶ ἡ ροδοχρῶς Ἑλένα Λακεδαιμονίᾳ κοσμος.

• As a Thessalian horse in a chariot, so rose-coloured Helen was an
 ‘ornament to Lacedaemon.’ A like image to which, by the by, we
 also find in this Jewish Song, i. 9. only Egyptian horses are mentioned,
 which were in Judea most famed for excellence. How, again, other-
 wise shall we justify Homer, in the accounts he gives us of the Gre-
 cian captains, Achilles, Patroclus, &c. their killing, fleaing and cut-
 ting asunder animals of the herd or flock, their lighthing and blowing

is well known that families and comparisons may be sufficiently decent and delicate in one age through its greater simplicity, and yet may become in another unhandsome and offensive through its greater refinement, or perhaps licentiousness. In like manner it is certain, that discourses and actions may be represented with perfect agreeableness to usage and custom in one period, and yet may appear unlikely to have been spoken and performed in a succeeding one, before the arrival of which, an immense varia-

the fire, and their preparing by pot or spit their own dinners from them; as well as of some of their other employments which, however they might be conformable to the plainness of their own times, are very opposite to the practice of ours. Indeed every person should transport himself in imagination to the age and country of a writer, and judge of his sentiments and expressions by the opinions and customs there and then prevalent. Nevertheless, it may be questioned whether all the passages which Mr. Voltaire exhibits from this song, to make good the charge of grossness and deviation from probability against its author, are rightly produced. For example, the word turned *cluster* by Mr. Voltaire, and by our translators *bundle*, chap. i. 13. is rendered a *bag* or *box*, Hagg. i. 6. Prov. vii. 20. wherefore some repository of precious and fragrant perfume; which ladies of rank and opulence were accustomed to wear, might be intended. Then, again, the last clause of that verse may be translated, 'It shall abide between my breasts;' for the word rendered, 'lie all night,' doth not necessarily include the idea of night in it, but only that of mere permanence or continuance, Zechar. v. 4. Job xxxix. 28. Isai. i. 21. Job xxxix. 9. xli. 14. Thus the meaning will be no more than this, As a box of myrrh hanging continually between the breasts gives delight to the senses of all around, so the husband or bridegroom would procure her undecaying favour and acceptance. So too the descriptions chap. vii. 1, 2. have been supposed to relate, not to these parts of the body naked and unclothed, which are mentioned, but to the dresses thereof. See Patrick's Comment. and Outlines of a New Commentary on Solomon's Song, particularly page 105, &c.

tion or change in language and behaviour hath been introduced, when they are examined by the standard which is thence formed. Nevertheless, Mr. Voltaire gives no indulgence from such considerations, equitable and candid as it would have been. Besides, should it not be remembered, that images are very apt and pertinent for illustrating and explaining a subject, though they be low * and mean, instead of lofty, and grand, and splendid, when they are easy and familiar, and there is a manifest and evident appearance of similitude? Yea, further, that images may have had a great fitness to serve this end, when they were used in those remote places and distant times, which we now are prone to blame for the fault of dissimilarity †, only because the things whence

* Thus Homer has been vindicated from censure, when he resembles the Grecian army to swarms of flies which buzz round milk-pails, that he may impress his readers with a sense of the eagerness and avidity for battle which was spread through the immense crowd. The same way Virgil has been defended, in likening the Tyrians, for their ardour in building the different parts of their new city, to bees diligent in their various labours amidst warm sunshine, in the beginning of summer. *Æneid* i. 432.

† This is a thing very supposable. And to take it for granted, that it is the case in comparisons which are made from things we now do either but little, or not at all, understand, instead of censuring and condemning a writer for them, who uses so many images extremely proper and apposite for giving clearer and livelier ideas of his subject, as this author does, is no more than exercising common candour and fairness. Thus, as to the passage with which Mr. Voltaire finds fault, 'That a king's daughter should say, "I am brown, yet I am beautiful like Solomon's furs,"' (which, I suppose, is his quotation of chap. i. 5. where our translation hath, 'I am black, but comely as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon,') might there not be a great propriety in the similes to express at once her dark complexion, the tents

the comparisons are drawn, are at present, through the defectiveness of accounts about them, very imperfectly comprehended? Yet all this our author overlooks, or pays no due attention to.

Thereafter he proceeds thus, ‘Several Rabbis have advanced, that this luscious eclogue not only is not Solomon’s, but is not so much as authentic;’ But though some of the Talmudical doctors are reported to have said this song was written by King Hezekiah’s council, among whom they tell us the prophet Isaiah was one, and have been followed in this opinion by Moses Kimchi, and several other masters, the generality have taught that it was written by Solomon; as indeed it may be questioned whether the former, I mean the Talmudical doctors, did not rather intend to attribute its public reception into the canon, than its writing, to these friends of Hezekiah. The title itself leads us to think Solomon † was its author, of the wild Arabs being made of black or dusky goats-hair, and her magnificent appearance, the coverings of Solomon’s tent being very rich and brilliant? and might not the same thing be true about the images used in other places, were we fully acquainted with the objects, particularly chap. vii. 4. &c?

† It is true it runs *אשר לשלמה* *Asher leshelemon*, which the above quoted author of the *Outlines of a New Commentary*, &c. would render ‘which is concerning Solomon,’ as likewise the author of the *New Translation of the Song*; for, in the beginning of his annotations, he tells us, ‘Perhaps it ought to have been rendered, “which is concerning Solomon,” adding, that the preafix in the original ‘hath evidently this sense in Ps. lxxii.’ But is not the preposition the same as is placed before David’s name in the titles to those Psalms, where none ever questioned the design was to instruct us, that David was the penman thereof, particularly Ps. iii, vii, xviii. to omit many others? Is it not also employed in the same meaning in the title of the prayer which none ever doubted to be the work of the prophet Habakkuk, iii. 1? Even as to Psalm lxxii. it is not agreed by all, that

as we are expressly assured he was of many other songs 1 Kings, v. 12. while it also implies, it was among them † all the most excellent and precious. Nor is there any thing in its frame and structure which compells us to regard it † as the composition of a later age.

it should have the signification in the title there, which that author would give it; wherefore the Targum hath paraphrased it, 'A Psalm spoken prophetically by the hands of Solomon,' and our translators have placed in the margin, 'A Psalm of Solomon.'

† This seems to be the natural import of the inscription, Song of Songs; as Holy of Holies is most holy, and ornament of ornaments is most excellent ornament, Ezek. xvi. 7. and king of kings is most exalted king, Ezek. xxvi. 7. and heaven of heavens is most high heaven, 1 Kings, viii. 27.

† It hath, I own, been made an argument that this song must be the production of some later writer than Solomon, that David's name is written in chap. iv. 4. דָּוִד with a *i*od, which is the manner of writing it in Ezekiel, Zechariah, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, as it is also in the books of Amos and Hosea, who prophesied only about two hundred years after Solomon's marriage; whereas in Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, it is written דָּוִד without a *i*od. Compare here Critical Review, April, 1768.

But there is here a mistake. For in Ezekiel it is written both ways. In chap. xxxiv. 23. with a *i*od, and in ver. 24. and xxxvii. 24. without a *i*od. Besides, is it reasonable to build so important an inference on so small a variation, when it seems to have been a matter regulated by private choice and inclination rather than by public custom, in which of the two ways the name David should be written? wherefore even in Isaiah and Jeremiah it occurs without a *i*od, though the one prophesied almost half a century, and the other near two centuries after Hosea and Amos, who are mentioned as having introduced the *i*od into it; and in Ezekiel, a contemporary of Jeremiah, it is found both ways, which may account for its being said by different writers, that he writes it without a *i*od, and that he writes it with it. Agreeably, I have observed one word of the same form written both with and without a *i*od, in books which are reckoned productions of one age. For a prince or ruler of the house of God is דָּוִד *negid*, Nehem. xi. 11. but in 1 Chron. ix. 11. 2 Chron. xxxi. 13. is דָּוִד *negid*, which shews

Further, whereas Mr. Voltaire asserts, ' That several Rabbis have advanced, not only that the ' Song is not Solomon's,' of which already, ' but ' that it is not so much as authentic,' by which he must mean, as the clause is here distinguished and contrasted, that it does not even belong to the canon of Sacred Scripture; there is here a gross misrepresentation. For none of the Rabbis, antient or modern*, have denied its canonical authority. On the contrary, though of old they may have permitted its

it was arbitrary. Perhaps others may have remarked more instances of such diversity. Is not Nebuchadnezzar's name written by authors, pretty much coætaneous, several different ways? I shall only add, the ingenious Mr. Hallet was so far from looking on David with a *iod*, as a departure from the primary and original spelling in times near the captivity, that, he suspects, wherever it is written without *iod* in the Bible, it is misspelt. See his Scripture Notes, vol. 2. p. 49.

* Says Abenezra in his preface to this book, according to Wolfius, Bibliotheca Hebraic. tom. 2. ' Far be it from any to affirm, that ' the Song of Songs should treat of carnal pleasure, for all things are ' spoken figuratively in it. And, indeed, unless there had been the ' greatest dignity in it, it would not have been placed among the books ' of Scripture. Nor is there any controversy about that,' In Seder Olam Rabbah, or the Great Chronicle, the Jews tell us, c. 15 ' When Solomon was become old, and drew near to the grave, the ' Holy Spirit dwelt in him, and so he composed these three books, the ' Proverbs, the Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes.' Though indeed there does not seem to have been an entire agreement among them about the time of life when he framed this song; for R. Jonathan in Ialkut ad 1 Kings, iii. 28. makes it to have been a production of his youth. Once more, Mercer hath quoted a passage from Midrash Shir, which is a Jewish historical and allegorical commentary on the Song, where it is said ' That their wise men had disputed about the authority of ' Ecclesiastes, but never had any debate about the divine authority of ' this book,' Vid. Poli Synopsis. in Cantic.

perusal * to none but persons of mature age, afraid that they, of shorter standing in the world, would overlook the spiritual and allegorical sense which they supposed to be hidden under the letter of it, and that they would abuse some passages of it, through this neglect of the figurative intention, according to the propensity of nature in the earlier period of life to feed wanton desires, they have with the most perfect unanimity maintained it was a divine book; and † not a few of them have bestowed the most ex-

* So Origen tells us *Praefat. in Ezek. ad Eustochium*, tom. 5. 458. 'Nam nisi quis apud Hebraeos aetatem sacerdotalis ministerii, i. e. tricesimum annum impleverit, nec principia Geneseos, nec Canticum Canticorum, nec hujus voluminis (Ezekielis,) exordium et finem legere permittitur, ut ad perfectam scientiam et mysticos intellectus plenum humanae naturae tempus accedat.' To the like purpose Jerome speaks concerning the manner of the Jews with relation to this book, though less positively, and at the same time advises persons to forbear its perusal, who have not obtained a good degree of mastery over sensual desires, *Hom. 1. in Cantic. tom. 7. fol. 64.* 'Moneo, et consilium do omni qui nondum carnis et sanguinis molestiis caret, neque ab affectu naturae materiali abscedit, ut a lectione libelli hujus, eorumque quae in eo dicuntur, penitus sibi temperet: aiunt enim observari etiam apud Hebraeos, quod, nisi quis ad aetatem perfectam maturamque pervenerit, libellum hunc ne quidem in manibus tenere permittitur.' Compare Theodoret's works. tom. 1. p. 985.

† Thus in the Talmudic tract *□□□ iadin*, five *De lotione manuum*, cap. 3. sect. 5. as in Surenhusius's edition of the *Mishna*, R. Akiba expresses himself thus, 'Far be it from any Israelite to say, that the Song of Songs pollutes the hands, or is not holy, because the whole world is not of so great value as that day wherein the Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the *hagiographa* are holy, but the Song of Songs is most holy: and if there hath been any difference of opinions about Solomon's writings, it hath only been about Ecclesiastes.' This reading of *hagiographa* here is followed by R. So-

travagant praises and commendations on it. Even the Chaldee paraphrast, while he explains it of God's love to his chosen nation of Israel, from the calling of Abraham till Solomon's time, prefers it to the other § ten Songs in the Bible by prophetic persons, which only celebrate particular benefits.

Mr. Voltaire adds, 'Theodore of Mopsuestia was of the same opinion;' that is, if I understand him aright, 'that the Song was neither Solomon's, nor so much as authentic,' or of divine authority. But it is evident he believed it to be a genuine production of the Jewish prince, from a fragment * of his writings still preserved, in which he reasons from his eminent wisdom, that he would never have composed it with a design to promote lewdness; and from the words of Theodoret, who is said by Pope Pelagius†,

Isidore and others; though Abarbanel, in his Commentary on 1 Kings iii. 12. quotes the passage, 'All the Songs are holy,' &c. I suppose the reader knows that Hagiographa is a name for the third class of their sacred books, which they divide into the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, and comprehends Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles. These five small books, again, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther, they call, by way of distinction, Megilloth, among which the Song is placed first, because it was read at the feast of the passover, which precedes other feasts.

§ Huet. Dem. Evang. prop. iv. 356. &c. Wachner. Antiq. Hebr. sect. 1. cap. 27. and Michael. Praefat. in Cantic. page 17.

* See this fragment cited in next page.

† 'Pelagii Papae Epistola 5, quae est tertia ad Eliam et Istriae episcopos.' Speaking of Theodoret, some of whose writings he condemned, he says, 'Alia vero scripta ejus non solum recipimus, sed etiam contra adversarios utimur. Nam cum Theodorus Canticum Cantecorum, vellet exponere, et non ad commenta, sed potius ad deliramenta laboraret, per hunc librum Aethiopiae reginae blanditum

to have alluded to him, where he blames some for maintaining that the wise Solomon penned it in celebration of the loves of himself and of his queen, the king of Egypt's daughter. The former part, therefore, of Mr. Voltaire's assertion, is false. As to the latter part of it, again, there is indeed some testimony to its truth. For Leontius, who was first an advocate at Constantinople, and afterwards a monk in Palestine; and flourished about the year of Christ 600, affirms, according to his words quoted by Fabricius †, that he cut it off from the sacred books. Nevertheless, this fact is doubted; for it appears from Facundus §, an African bishop, about the year 540, and from Simeon, bishop of Betharsam, or Arsamopolis, in Persia, about the year 510, as well as from the words of Theodoret, which are cited in the last note, that he wrote a commentary upon it.—Moreover, Leontius writes with so manifest keenness and violence of temper against him, as admonishes every prudent and candid reader not to credit all his ac-

* professus est. Quod Theodoretus reprehendens, nomen quidem suppressit, sed tamen vesaniam patefecit. Eiusdem namque libri commenta conscribens ait, audio plures Canticum Canticorum detrahentes et non credentes spiritualesse librum, fabulas autem quasdam per vesaniam texentes componere et præsumere dicentes, quia sapiens Solomon ad seipsum et filium Pharaonis hunc librum conscripsit. Quomodo ergo nulla scripta eiusdem Theodoreti recipimus, qui illum etiam contra Theodorum assertorem veritatis invenimus? Haec ad scripta vestra respondemus.' Apud Harduin. Concil. tom. 3. page 438.

† Bibl. Graec. tom. 9. page 159.

§ Ibid. And see Du Pin Bibl. Ecclesiastique, tom. 1. under the different articles of Leontius, Theodore and Facundus. Also Dr. Lardner's Credibility, vol. 9. page 397.—399.

counts.—The charges and accusations of such disrespect to this sacred book, finally, are to be found among his enemies only after his death, when he could no longer answer for himself, in order still to preserve, in spite of their endeavours to blacken and defame him, the high esteem and honour which he seems to have possessed through his life. For these reasons, James Basnage and Dr. Lardner hesitate not to declare, that there is in all probability, some misrepresentation of his sentiments about this point. For my own part, though I do not think it very material whether this bishop of Mopsuestia rejected the Song from the canon of scripture or not, as he filled that see so late as the 390th year of Christ, when it is considered that its divine authority had been so universally acknowledged * by the Christian fathers before, I dare not, after the most careful examination, be positive that he did exclude it. For in the alone words of his, which we have preserved, upon the subject, as they were produced by his accusers at the second council of Constantinople, which was called by Justinian, in the year 546, and in which the condemnation of his books was procured, he vindicates it from a licentious and impure in-

* Thus it is in Melito's catalogue of the Sacred Books, about the year 170; in Origen's, about 230; in Athanasius's, about 326; in the council of Laodicea's, about 363; in Amphilochius's of Iconium, about 370; in Epiphanius's of Salamis, about 368. Not to speak of Jerome's, who was a cotemporary with Theodore. Yet it is also to be owned, that Philastrius, bishop of Brescia, in his treatise of Heresies, which he is thought to have written about the year 380, mentions some who denied its right of admission into the sacred canon. *Hæreses*. 131.

tention; and, while he looks upon it as a marriage-song, seems to own that it had some moral meaning, although he would not commend it as prophetic of the blessings of the Christian church †.

Mr. Voltaire subjoins, ‘ And the celebrated Gro-

† I cite now the whole fragment above referred to, in which, according to the report even of his enemies, he speaks thus; ‘ *Quae omnia oportet legentes librum cogitando, nec ad impudicitiae hortationem putare esse conscriptionem sapientissimi, et propter hoc odisse; (qualis enim esset utilitas Salomoni festinare ad conscriptionem impudicitiae, cui et sine conscriptione potestas erat impudicitiae!) nec colaudare codicem, sicut habentem prophetica dictationem bonorum ecclesiae. Si enim prophetica gratiam meruisset, mentionem alicubi Dei fecisset. (In nulla enim prophetica scriptura Deus non memorat) sed scire debent omnes, et aemulationis nuptialis codicem mensale convivium esse, sicut et de amore convivium postea Plato conscripsit. Unde nec Judaeis, nec nobis publica lectio Cantici Canticorum facta est, tanquam domesticus et nuptialis Salomonis convivii cantus opprobria sponsae sonans.*’ Harduin. Concil. tom. 3. Constantinop. Concil. 2. Collatio. 4. p. 89.—Agreeably, Du Pin’s account of Theodore’s opinion is only, that he says, it is a difficult matter to write an useful commentary upon it. Ubi supra page 335. Dr. Mosheim, who speaks of him as a man truly eminent both in learning and genius, and as a free and unprejudiced enquirer after truth, who followed the explications of scripture given by his predecessors only as far as he found them agreeable to reason, represents him indeed to have been a great enemy to the allegorical method of interpreting the Old Testament, common in his age, whereby every passage was cruelly tortured and that, without the least spark of judgment, or the smallest air of probability, either to typify Christ and the blessings of his kingdom, or Antichrist, and the wars and desolations which he was to bring upon the earth. See his Ecclesiastical History, translated by Mr. Macclaine, 8vo. vol. 1. p. 393.—395. If his Commentary on the Song be among his Commentaries concealed with the Nestorians in the east, and ever see the light, it may explain what is now more dubious and uncertain about his sentiments.

‘tius calls the Song of Songs a libidinous work, *flagitiosus*.’ But I cannot find that this great man hath expressed himself so harshly about it. At the same time that he thinks it was a composition of Solomon concerning himself and Pharaoh’s daughter, in its literal and primary sense, he writes, that he is supposed to have framed it with such art and address, that it may, without much straining, be considered as an allegorical description of God’s love toward the Jewish people, as the Chaldee paraphrast, and after him Maimonides hath shewed. And he likewise observes, as this love was a figure of Christ’s love toward his church, that Christians have, with a commendable zeal, exerted their wits to accommodate the words of this song in a typical view to this subject; encouraged by the example of the apostles, who have compared Christ’s relation to his church, to the conjugal one, or that between a bridegroom and his spouse. Thus he; as may be seen in his preface to his commentary on * the Song, in which, if he does not raise its aim so high as some, he certainly does not merit to be ranked with them who deem it a wicked and flagitious piece.—So a

* ‘Est hoc canticum colloquium inter Salomonem et filiam regis Aegypti, interloquentibus etiam choris duobus,—credetur autem Salomon, quo magis perennaret hoc scriptum, ea arte id composuisse, ut sine multa distortionē *αλληγορίας* in eo inveniri possent, quae Dei amorem erga populum Israeliticum exprimerent, quod et sensit et ostendit Chaldaeus hic paraphrastes; nec aliter accepit Maimonides. Ille autem amor typus cum fuerit amoris Christi erga ecclesiam, Christiani ingenia sua, ad applicanda ad eam rem hujus carminis verba, exercuerunt laudabili studio: nam et apostoli Christi cum ecclesia conjunctionem matrimonio comparaverant,’ 2 Cor. xi. 2. Eph. v. 32. Apoc. xix, 7, 9.

late writer, Jo. David Michaelis, professor of philosophy, and fellow of the royal academy of sciences at Gottingen, hath considered this Song not as † a celebration of the loves of Solomon and the Egyptian princess in the characters of bridegroom and bride at their nuptials, like Bossuet, but as a celebration of their mutual tender affections in the state of husband and wife; the more admirable and praiseworthy, as polygamy then prevailed; and supposes it was written to commend the conjugal society as a source of pleasure and delight in human life: in which view, it is also extolled in the book of Proverbs, in opposition to some severe and rigid moralists, who did then, or would afterwards, decry and vilify it. But though he hath not allowed, more than Grotius, that spiritual sense to be intended, which many of the antient Christians have illustrated in their commentaries and other writings, but which, it will be granted, some have pursued too minutely, he is far from giving any ground to say, that he accounted it a loose and licentious composition.

Of his reflections against the Proverbs.

MR. Voltaire proceeds a little after * to the Pro-

† Vid. Michaelis. Not. ad Lowthi Praelectiones.

* He says indeed, first, ubi supra 329. 'Ecclesiastes is of a more serious turn, but no more Solomon's than the Song of Songs.' Wherefore it might have been expected I should now have undertaken the defence of the book of Ecclesiastes against his cavils. But it is plain he wrote here Ecclesiastes, by mistake, for Ecclesiasticus; because he affirms, 'The author is commonly thought to be Jesus the son of Sirach, while others attribute it to Philo of Byblus;' and because he men-

verbs, which have been also ascribed to Solomon, and says †, ‘The Proverbs have been attributed to Isaiah, Elziah, Sobna, Eliakim, Joake and many others; but to whomsoever we owe this collection of eastern sentences, we may be sure it does not come from a royal hand. Would a king have said, ‘The wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion? This is the language of a subject or slave, who trembles at a frown from his master.’ But can this reason, against the genuineness of this Proverb, persuade any impartial person? Why might not Solomon propose this observation as a caveat to his subjects against provoking him by disobedient carriage, that a king’s wrath was dreadful to his people, like the roaring of a lion ‡ to the beasts of the field? especially when he allures them at the same time to secure his friendship by a dutiful behaviour, setting forth its beneficial and salutary effects, in way of annotations things contained in it disagreeable to the Pentateuch; as Abraham’s going to sacrifice Isaac at the time of the deluge, and Joseph the patriarch’s being king of Egypt: whence he infers, ‘That whoever he was, the Pentateuch was not known in his time.’ Now these things are not true of our book of Ecclesiastes, which was neither ever supposed to owe its original to one or other of these two persons, nor contains one syllable of such contradictions to the Mosaic history. These remarks only agree to the book of Ecclesiasticus; accordingly, which shews it was his intention to attack this alone here, after he has fallen foul on the Proverbs, he writes thus, ‘We now come to Ecclesiastes.’ With his charge against Ecclesiasticus, however, I do not think myself concerned; for, though the church of Rome makes it a part of canonical scripture, we justly reckon it apocryphal.

† Ibid, page 329.

‡ So he observes elsewhere, ‘The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whose provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul.’ Prov. xx. 2.

tithesis or contrast, in the next clause, thus, 'But his 'favour is as the dew upon the grass,' comfortable and useful, as that revives the herb of the ground. Prov. xix. 12.

He goes on, 'Would Solomon have harped so 'much on a whorish woman?' But must not every wise man see cause for remonstrances against lewdness and debauchery, and for exposing its mischievous consequences, in proportion to his opportunities of wide and extensive observation upon human life? Above all, will not such a person, when he applies himself to give prudence to the simple, i. e. the credulous through want of experience, and to communicate to the young man knowledge and understanding for the guidance of his steps, think it necessary to dissuade from this vice, by a representation of its hurtful effects; as in that stage of life, there is too strong a bias and propensity, in general, to its gratifications? And might not Solomon be more disposed to enlarge upon this topic, for the benefit of the gay and sanguine, if he made these reflections, after he had learned, * by sad and painful feeling, the noxious influence of loose indulgences?

* So the Hebrew doctors, in Seder Olam Rabbah, cap. 15. make him to have dictated them, if not to have written them, when he was old, and near his death. And in like manner, some of them speak elsewhere. Nay, the 70 have been thought to strengthen this opinion, that the Proverbs were composed by him after his recovery to a virtuous and holy life, from which he had been seduced by outlandish women, because they turn the original, Prov. xxiv. 32. ὕστερον εὗρον μετάνοια, 'I afterwards repented;' where we have, 'I considered 'well,' and more justly, since Solomon describes there only his own reflections upon, and improvement of viewing the garden of the slug-gard, which was over-run with thorns and nettles, and had its fence or wall demolished. Yet others have thought he dictated and wrote them

Thereafter he subjoins, ‘ Would he have said, ‘ Look not † on the wine when it appears bright in ‘ the glass, and its colour shines? I very much question whether drinking glasses were made in Solomon’s time: the invention is but modern: the ‘ antients drank out of wooden or metal cups; and ‘ this single passage betrays the book to be the work ‘ of some Alexandrine Jew, and to be written long ‘ since Alexander.’ Thus, from this one passage, he concludes the book spurious; yea, that it did not appear in the world till far more than 600 years after Solomon was dead: but no more is the inference here, against the authenticity of the book, well founded than before. Whether glass was made at all before Solomon’s time, the manufacture of which is said by Pliny † to have had its rise from the accidental mixture of the sand of the river Belus, upon the coast of Tyre, with kindled nitre, when some merchants, who had arrived there with a ship, used lumps of it, instead of stones, for raising their pots or pans over a fire on shore, I pretend not to determine; as the author who gives this account, is silent about the æra of the discovery. For I do not think any solid argument, for its invention in Job’s age, can be raised from the skies being compared to a molten looking-glass, in our translation, Job xxxvii. 18. because the expression in the original, may relate to a mirror of polished brass, such

before his lapse into idolatry and other vices; because he makes no mention of his faults here, as in Ecclesiastes, and because his historian tells us he spoke 3000 proverbs, ere he gives us any account of his being misled and drawn aside from right behaviour. 1 Kings iv. 32. xi. 1, 2, &c.

† This is taken from Prov. xxiii. 31. † Nat. Hist. lib. 36. cap. 26.

as were the mirrours of the Israelites, *Exod. xxxviii. 8.* since of them were made the laver of brass, and its foot or base: And as little do I build on *Deut. xxxiii. 19.* where it is declared, the tribe of Zebulon ‘shall suck of the abundance of the sea, and of the treasure hidden in the sand,’ as a proof that the art of making glass was known before the entry of the Israelites into Canaan. For supposing there was here a prediction of wealth and riches to Zebulon, from the trade which would be carried on in that commodity, on the confines of their territory, as *Le Clerc*, after *Jonathan* in his Targum, hath imagined, it might refer to it, as to an article of commerce that was to be found out in some after period, and not as to one already in use. But as to drinking glasses, I allow they were a much more modern invention, upon *Pliny’s* authority, who speaks of it as having happened during *Nero’s* reign, when two of them, tho’ of moderate * size, were sold at almost 50 pounds sterling. Nevertheless, that the art of making them was so modern, can create no difficulty and embarrassment here. For *Mr. Voltaire* ought not to have represented *Solomon* to mention glass at all; though the *Vulgate* version hath turned the clause, ‘Cum splenduerit in vitro color ejus, when the colour of the wine shineth in the glass.’ Even the *Alexandrine* interpreters themselves, as much as he, pronounce the book, on account of the passage before

* *Plin. Nat. Hist. 36. 26.* ‘Sed quid refert, *Netonis* principatu reperta vitri arte, quae modicos calices duos, quos appellabant pterotos *H. S.* sex millibus venderet.—Ufus vero ad potandum argenti metalla et auri pepulit.’ *Mille sesterrium*, according to *Arbuthnot*, is 81. 13. 5½d. The whole therefore is 481. 19s. 1d.

us, the work of some Alexandrine Jew, have left the materials, of which the drinking vessel was formed, undetermined†; so that it might have been of wood, or stone, or metal, after all they have said about it. And they translated, as they have done, with reason. For, accordingly, *cup* is the sense given of כוס *chus*, which is the marginal reading here, in Gen. xl. 11, 13, 21. 2 Sam. xii. 3. and Psal. xvi. 5. lxxv. 8. Yet the genuineness of these parts of scripture was never, on account of that term, suspected, tho' it might have been denied therefore, at least with greater justice and propriety, upon the same pretence, supposing the Vulgate to have meant to translate it in the passage before us, because these were still longer written before the invention of drinking glasses. And this sense of *cup*, by the principles of analogy, may be also the signification of the textual reading כִּי *chis*, if it is to be preferred, since critics are agreed that words which differ only as to their middle radical *Iod* or *Vau*, have commonly a similitude and likeness of meaning; tho', I confess, it is to be met with no where else in the sacred books, but in the sense of a bag or purse. Till, therefore, it can be shown, that some glass vessel for liquor is intended here, all objections, because drink-

† Their words are, *Εαν γαρ εις τας φιαλας και τα ποτηρια δως τις οφθαλμους σου.* Το *φιαλη*, which is turned *vial* in the book of Revelation, a reader is perhaps ready to affix the idea of glass. But unjustly. For we read of golden vials, Rev. v. 8. xv. 7. The name is given with the proper adjective to brazen basons or bowls, Exod. xxxviii. 3. 1 Kings vii. 41, 45. to a silver bowl or bowls, Num. vii. 13, &c. many different times; to golden basons or bowls finally, 2 Chron. iv. 8, 22. 1 Chron. xxviii. 7. 2 Kings xxiv. 15. Compare Joseph. Antiq. 3. 6, 6, 8. *Φιαλη* then does not necessarily suggest the notion of glass.

ing-glasses were only found out more than a thousand years after Solomon's time, against the Proverbs being his genuine work, from the admonition before us, must be groundless and impertinent.

We may then rest satisfied, notwithstanding these cavils, that the Proverbs are a work of Solomon the son of David and king of Israel, according to their introductory * title, chap. i. 1. For he, we are told, set in order many proverbs, Eccl. xii. 9. yea, spoke 3000 proverbs, 1 Kings iv. 32; more, by consequence, than are contained in this book, whatever Jerome † hath said; unless he be interpreted to mean, that here was, as it were, their pith and quintessence. I must be understood, however, to say this with exception of the words of Agur, whom, indeed, I look upon as a different person from Solomon, both from the delineation he makes of his own character, Prov. xxx. 2. compared with Eccl. i. 16. and 1 Kings ii. 6, 9. and from the account he gives us of his prayer, wherein he deprecated the two extremes of riches and plenty, and asked only food

* Accordingly they were regarded by Philo in this light; for he cites a passage from Prov. iii. 11. thus, 'One of the followers of Moses, who in our native tongue is called Solomon, hath said, "Son, despise not the chastning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." De Congressu, &c. page 449. From the beginning, till the end of the ix. chapter, there seems to be rather a preface to rouse attention to the lessons that follow, and to dispose men to receive benefit from them; which may explain the inscription at the head of the x. chapter.

† In his *Quaestiones Hebraicae*, in lib. Regum, he tells us, 'In Proverbiis noningenti et quindecim versus continentur, in quibus etiam continentur tria millia parabolarum.' Now this last seems only true in the sense above explained. The Masora makes no more 5170, than 1863.

convenient for him. Prov. xxx. 7. And the exception must be also extended to the words which King Lemuel's mother taught him, chap. xxxi. 1. whoever she was.

Whether he wrote them or not, is a different question. The Talmudists, I know, ascribe * the writing of them to Hezekiah and his company, among whom they reckon Isaiah, Eliakim son of Hilkiah, Sebna the scribe, and Joah †, son of Asaph the recorder. But, which may discredit even this tale, they there also ascribe the writing of Isaiah's prophecies to the same persons; though, according to their own tradition, Hezekiah died before Isaiah had finished his work as God's messenger to the nation. Besides, the Jewish commentators do not support this opinion with any reason but such as rather serves to persuade us of the contrary. For, as it is only said at the beginning of chap. xxv. 'These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out,' and not at the commencement of the book, it is natural to think, that all which precede, were written by Solomon himself; and that only these which follow this inscription, were collected by some persons whom Hezekiah, in his zeal for reformation, appointed unto this work. Had all been gathered by them, this notice would have been given in the frontispiece, instead of being deferred to this place.

So much for vindicating the book of Proverbs,

* Bava Bathra, i. 14. Some, however, think they speak rather of the reception of this book into the canon by them.

† The list then given by Mr. Voltaire, in the place quoted at the beginning of this subdivision of the section, is not altogether accurate.

which certainly is an admirable work, consisting of excellent rules and observations for directing the conduct of persons in every age and condition, but especially of persons just entering into the world, and more ready, through their inexperience, to be insnared into wrong courses, to their utter ruin. Among these rules, nevertheless, a reverence of God is in a particular manner inculcated again and again, with great earnestness, as it is the noblest source and principle, and the best security for the discharge of other duties amidst the temptations of life. What is there comparable to this Jewish treasure in all the sentences of Solon, Thales, Bias and others, whom heathen antiquity so much extolled? Mean while, the royal dignity of the author tends more to awaken the attention, and procure the regard of the world to his maxims and precepts, than if they had been dictated by some established preceptor, or recluse philosopher, and proceeded from the school or the shade.

Accordingly, it hath been reckoned a part of the sacred canon by the Jews very unanimously. For though some were once disposed to rank it among apocryphal writings, because its words were contradictory to one another, they afterwards changed *

* See Tract. Talmud, Shabbath. ii. 30. Perhaps they here thought of Proverbs xxvi. 4. 5. where we have these, at first view, opposite directions; 'Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.' But they are easily made consistent. In the former, we are dissuaded against answering a fool according to his folly, by imitation of his scurrility, buffoonery, abusive and railing language, as appears from the reason with which it is enforced, 'Lest thou also become like to him.' In the latter, we are required to an-

their mind, because they saw there was a method of reconciling them.

Of his reflections against Ecclesiastes.

LAST of all, Mr. Voltaire falls on our book of Ecclesiastes. 'We * now come to Ecclesiastes, which Grotius affirms to have been written in the time of Zorobabel. This author's freedom is known to every body. He says, That men are in nothing better than beasts; that it is better never to have been born than to exist; that there is no other life; that the only good is to eat and to drink, and be merry with the woman one loves. Solomon perhaps might have talked in this manner to some of his women, and some construe these sayings as objections which he makes to himself; but, besides the libertinism of which they strongly favour, they have nothing of the appearance of objections; and to make an author mean the contrary of what he says, is an insult on the world.'

But what poor pretences had Grotius for judging as he does, that this book was a composition after the captivity, by several persons whom Zorobabel had appointed to collect or gather opinions about the happiness of men, and to pass such collection upon the world as a work of King Solomon,

swer a fool according to his folly, by sound arguments, exposing the falshood of his principles, and the absurdity of his conduct, that we may take down his presumption, and cure him of that vain conceit of his own superior understanding, which silence would leave him with.
'Left he be wise in his own conceit.'

* Ibid, page 330.

after he had repented of his evil ways? Though the Talmudical writers, according to the general interpretation of their words, have ascribed the writing of this book *, as well as of Isaiah, Proverbs and Song, to Hezekiah and his men, none of the Jews, at least almost none of them, ever questioned but Solomon spoke the things contained in it; and this, in his advanced † age, after he was reclaimed from his love of strange women, and the sins into which they betrayed him; as indeed there are through the piece, many expressions which carry in them an air of penitence; see Eccl. ii. 1, 2. xi. 18. vii. 26, &c.—To Solomon alone agree these descriptions which the person who assumes the province of instructor here, gives of his superior wisdom, i. 16. and of the great magnificence and variety of his works, and of the transcendent pomp, and splendor, and gaiety in which he lived, ii. 4.—10. and to no other is the character suitable which he draws of himself, as having sought out and set in order many proverbs, xii. 9. which things constitute presumptions, till they be invalidated by contrary evidence, that he is the author.

* See Talmud, Tract. Baba Bathra, i. e. porta posterior, ubi supra; which, however, as was hinted before, some understand rather of their admission of the book into the canon. Wachner Antiq. Hebraica, sect. 1. cap. 30.

† In Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 15, it is said, when Solomon had waxed old, and was near to his dissolution, the Holy Spirit rested upon him, so that he spoke the things which are contained in Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes: and in this date of Ecclesiastes, with reference to his time of life, they seem generally to agree. So R. Chiya Rabbah, and R. Jonathan, though they differ in assigning youth or middle age to Song or Proverbs. Vid. Midrash Shir Hashirim, and Ialkut Shimon apud Wachner sect. 1. cap. 25.

Further, the title, in its natural and obvious meaning, attributes the book to him as its author. For who but he was son of David, and at the same time king of Jerusalem, as he calls himself? chap. i. 1, 12. None of his successors on the throne could be so denominated, except in a loose and general sense, as David was his remote progenitor.—What although two words occur here (and they are no * more) which are not found in themselves, or in their root, any where else in the Hebrew books of the Bible, but only in the Chaldee part of Daniel's book, and in the Chaldee Targums or paraphrases on scripture? They might, notwithstanding, belong to the Hebrew language in its pure and unadulterated state. For how small a portion must we have of this, in a volume of no larger size than the Bible, as any one will be sensible, who will reflect that this must have been the case with the Greek or Latin languages, had we only pieces transmitted to us therein respectively, of equal bulk and magnitude? Accordingly, it often happens that we meet with words in a book of the Bible, which are only once read through the

* For though four have been mentioned, two of them are not justly numbered of this sort, viz. *סִיר* *sir*, rendered *pot*, chap. vii. 6. since it occurs, Exod. xvi. 3. and *אֲבִינָה* *abionah*, turned *desire*, chap. xii. 5. since *אָבָה* *abah* is often to be met with in the Hebrew Bible in the signification of *desiring*, or being well affected toward an object. The two words which are rightly instanced in are, first, *פֶּשֶׁר* *pesher*, the *interpretation*, Eccl. viii. 1. which is only read besides in Daniel ii. 4, 5. where the Chaldee part of that book begins, and is continued till the end of the vii. chapter. Compare also Targum on Gen. xl. 8. Judges vii. 19. and then *גִּמְצָה* *gumatz*, a *ditch*, Eccl. x. 8. which again appears no where in the Bible, but in Targum, Psal. vii. 16. and Prov. xxii. 4, &c. and in Syriac New Testament, Luke vi. 39.

whole extent of it from beginning to end, so that we must have recourse to the sister-dialects, Arabic, Syriac, or Chaldee, for the discovery of their signification; and yet no suspicion hath been formed, on this account, against its being written in the age of the person, whose name it bears. Why then should such an inference be made here from this circumstance, as to place Ecclesiastes below the Babylonish captivity?—Is it pretended, finally, that קובלת *Kobeleth*, the name which the speaker assumes here should be turned, the collector or heaper up of the various opinions of wise men about happiness, instead of, the preacher, as we have translated it after the Seventy and Vulgate? It is answered, though we were to prefer the sense of collector or gatherer, from the root קהל, *ka-hal*, to assemble, congregate, bring together, it might be very well accommodated to Solomon here, where his aim is to unite wandering souls from the pursuit of vanities to the prosecution of the supreme good, and where he, as it were, calls a multitude together, to hear and learn from him the path to true felicity. It seems therefore an idle unsupported fancy, that Ecclesiastes was the work of several persons in Zorobabel's time.

As to any passages again in this book, which seem to favour the gratification of irregular desires, and to remove the apprehensions of a future retribution, is it not manifest, that they should be explained † in

† Thus when it is said that 'a man hath no preeminence above a beast,' chap. iii. 19. it may be understood to be spoken not absolutely, or upon the whole, but in respect of the breath or respiration, which ceases alike in men and brutes at the moment of death. When it is said again, 'That the day of death is better than the day of birth,'

a qualified and limited sense, if they contain the real sentiments of the writer; or if they cannot be thus explained without violence, that they should be regarded as expressing the detestable principles of Epicureans and sensualists, which he wished to overthrow and confute? For, otherwise, they would be most inconsistent with the positions he advances, and the directions he gives, upon different occasions, through the treatise; as, to be more ready to hear or obey the counsels of virtue and piety, at attendance on the house of God, than to offer there the sacrifice of fools, which all did who continued to allow themselves in wicked living, however expensive or numerous their oblations, chap. v. 1. 2. to rejoice for God's acceptance and approbation of our works, ix. 7. to retrench superfluous expences for beneficence to the poor and distressed, xi. 1, 2. to moderate

vii. 1. which I suppose Mr. Voltaire paraphrases, 'It is better never to have been born, than to exist;' it may be understood to signify, that the time of a man's death, who hath spent this life well, or by virtuous actions acquired a good reputation to himself, which in the former clause of the verse is preferred to the most precious and fragrant perfume, is productive of more good to him, than the season of his nativity into this life, where all are subject to many woes and sorrows. Once more, when he bids eat, drink, and be merry or cheerful, chap. viii. 15. and live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest, for that is a man's portion in this life, ix. 9. he may be explained to advise no more than that persons should enjoy the fortunes which God bestows upon them by cheerful social repasts, instead of giving into parsimonious abstinence from the use of them, though still not so as to disable them from works of mercy and charity, which himself enjoins, iii. 12. xi. 12. and that they should solace themselves in the company of their own wives, instead of seeking the pleasures of whoredom and adultery, v. 15—21.

our indulgence to carnal desires, by the consideration of a future judgment, which judgment he asserts over and over, xi. 9. iii. 16, 17. &c. and to despise worldly pleasures as vain and unsatisfactory, ii. 2. vii. 2. Yea, otherwise, they will be quite subversive of the corollary which he deduces from the whole of his premises here, and which he leaves with his readers as his finishing lesson, which he aimed above all things to inculcate, ‘ Let us hear the conclusion ‘ of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man,’ the whole of his duty and felicity. ‘ For God shall bring ‘ every work into judgment, with every secret ‘ thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.’ And is such a method of interpretation shewing any * greater favour to a writer, than common candour dictates, from a regard to his avowed scope and intention? If the passages favour strongly of libertinism, when viewed in another light, this is so far from being an argument against the construction we put upon them, as Mr. Voltaire would make it, that it becomes a stronger proof and demonstration they ought to be so explained, in proportion as So-

* If we meet with any passage in Plato, Aristotle, Tully, Seneca, or any of the Gentile philosophers, which at first view appears to be repugnant to the declared principles of the author in other places, or to his evident intention in writing the piece where it occurs, we try to find out a convenient or commodious sense of the passage in question, by which he may appear consistent with himself, and cautious of defeating the end he had in view. And should not we follow the same rule of interpretation here which is so loudly prescribed by a careful and unprejudiced consideration and comparison of the whole treatise, instead of explaining this or that part in the way most absurd and nonsensical, and palpably subversive of the writer’s grand and ultimate aim?

lomon appears animated by a serious and religious design in the composition of the book. Suitably, we are told, though † some of the wise or learned men among the Jews were once disposed to reject this book from the canon of Scripture, because its words destroyed one another; in particular because it was said, ‘Rejoice O young man in thy youth, let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes,’ chap. xi. 9. which they thought clashed with Numb. xv. 39. ‘Remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a-whoring;’ They, notwithstanding, retained it as a part of canonical Scripture, because the beginning and conclusion of the book were the words of the law, and because the writer added in the particular passage which was mentioned as creating offence, ‘But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.’

There is then no reason to censure the book of Ecclesiastes, as the production of a later age than Solomon’s, and as in its contents unworthy of him;—Nor, by consequence, as this is the only work ascribed to him which remained to be vindicated, is there any ground to deny that he is really author of the works fathered on him.

As to what follows in Mr. Voltaire, ‘But though these books were written by a Jew, what is that to us? The Christian religion is indeed founded

† See Tract Shabbath, fol. 30. and Midrash Coheleth, fol. 114. and Michaelis ad Hagiographa, —and Wachner ubi supra, sect. 1. 30

' on Judaïsm, but not on all the Jewish books? Why
 ' should the Song of Songs be held more sacred
 ' among us, than the fables of the Talmud? The an-
 ' swer is, because we have included it in the Hebrew
 ' canon. And what is this same canon? It is a col-
 ' lection of authentic works. Well, and must a work
 ' of course be divine, for being authentic? For in-
 ' stance, a history of the kings of Juda, and of Si-
 ' chem, what is it but a history? A strange prepo-
 ' session, indeed! We despise and abhor the Jews;
 ' and yet we insist, that all such of their writings
 ' which we have collected, bear the sacred stamp of
 ' divinity. Never was such a contradiction heard of!
 I have bestowed some attention upon this paragraph
 already, and suggested then the true reason of our ve-
 neration * for their books. I therefore only now add,
 the greater displeasure and aversion Christians had at
 the Jews, it is plain, they would be less ready to re-
 ceive Jewish books as divine oracles, without satisfac-
 tory evidence that Jesus and his apostles honoured
 them as such; even, as it is evident, the more keen
 the malice and hatred of the Jews against Christiani-
 ty, they would be less forward to corrupt or alter
 their sacred books, so as to serve its cause and inte-
 rest. The circumstance, therefore, of the abhorrence
 of Christians at them, may rather be improved to the
 confirmation and establishment of our faith in the
 antient Scriptures.

* Part 1. section 6. page 34.

SECTION V.

Of his insinuation that Mathew's Gospel was not written till after the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, from the mention of Zacharias's death.

IN his Philosophical Dictionary, speaking of learned persons*, he says, ' They observe†, that, in St. Matthew, Jesus Christ says to the Scribes and Pharisees, that upon them should come all the innocent blood shed on the earth from the blood of righteous Abel to that of Zacharias the son of Barac, whom they slew between the temple and the altar.

' In all the history of the Hebrews, say they, we meet with no such person as Zacharias killed in the temple before the coming of the Messiah, nor in his time; but Josephus, in his history of the siege of Jerusalem, (chap. 19. book 4.) mentions a Zacharias the son of Barachias, who was killed in the middle of the temple by a faction of the Zelotes. This has given rise to a suspicion, that St. Matthew's Gospel was not written till after the taking of Jerusalem by Titus. But if we consider the infinite difference there must be between books divinely inspired, and such as are merely human, all these doubts, difficulties and objections immediately vanish.'

But what learned men ever expressed such a sus-

* See article Christianity, page 98.

† Thus the reader must have observed, it is his frequent manner to put objections in the mouths of others, which, it cannot be doubted, he himself approves, and triumphs in as unanswerable.

picion as Mr. Voltaire ascribes to them! Indeed there have not been wanting some, and among those a person of no less critical ability and reputation than Grotius, who supposed Zacharias the son of Baruch, whom Josephus * represents to have been slain in the middle of the temple, by two of the most daring of the Zelotes, only about the end of Nero's reign, and a little before Jerusalem was invested by the Roman armies, to be intended in the passage of St. Matthew, chap. xxiii. v. 35. But then they never drew the conclusion which he mentions from it, that St. Matthew's Gospel was a composition of a later date. No. They reckoned † our Lord spoke of his murder here by way of anticipation, through that power of prophecy which resided in him, and enabled him to foresee and foretell future contingencies even more distant, as appears from his history. They therefore still agreed with other critics about the age of this work, who, however they have differed concerning its precise time, some of them placing it eight, some fifteen, and some, upon the testimony of Irenaeus, that it was written when Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, so late as 28 years after Christ's ascension into heaven, have universally judged that it, as well as the Gospels of Mark and

* De Bello, 4. 5. 4.

† Thus Grotius on the place writes, '*Videri hic Christum adludere ad veterem historiam, 2 Paralip. 24. 17—22. ut simul insit ejus verbis futuri praesagium. Nam virorum bonorum atque insignium ultimus ab Hierosolymitis trucidatus, et quidem in ipso templo, dictus itidem est Zacharias, et quidem filius Baruchi, quod cum Baruchiae nomine idem haberi potest; cujus caedem statim secuta est obsidio, ut apud Josephum videre est.*'

Luke, was published a considerable while not only before the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, but before the commencement of its siege. And truly this may be argued from the manner of the Evangelist himself, which adds strength to the harmonious tradition of ancient Christians about its so early appearance. For he does not drop the least intimation, where he records our Saviour's prediction of the spread of the Roman armies through the land of Judea, and the desolation of its capital and temple by them, that it had been verified by the event, any more than these other sacred historians do, who were his companions in the kingdom of God. On the contrary, like them, by the expression, 'Let him that readeth, understand,' he calls upon all disciples of Jesus in that country, into whose hands his narrative might come, to be attentive to the signs that were declarative of the approaching distress and ruin, and inserts admonitions and warnings to them, to provide for their own safety.

But is there, after all, sufficient reason to imagine, that the Zacharias was meant, whose death Josephus there relates, as our author takes for granted, while he appears to every reader of penetration, willing to improve it into an evidence, that Matthew's Gospel was written after that event happened, and rather to deride the hypothesis which considers it as an instance of Christ's extraordinary knowledge? I apprehend not. I do not insist for shewing this, that the Zacharias of the gospels is slain between the temple and the altar; whereas the Zacharias of Josephus, in the period referred to, is killed in the middle of the temple. For I doubt

whether this difference can be of any force to persuade that another person was intended by the evangelists, since Josephus might have satisfied himself with so general an account of the scene of his death, though it had happened in the inner court, in which the altar of burnt-offering stood; as indeed he hath done in his narrative of the excision of a more ancient Zacharias, at the * command of Joash, which is admitted to have been transacted in the same court, about which he only says, ‘ The king ordered that he should die by stoning in the temple.’

There are other differences which seem to me of greater weight to evince the point. In Matthew, the Zacharias spoken of, is called the son of Barachias; but the Zacharias in Josephus, is styled the son of Baruch, which is a different name from the former, small as the variety betwixt these words is. For in the Greek version, *Βαρυχ* *Baruch*, is always used to translate the Hebrew *ברוך* *Baruch*, but *Βαραχίας* *Barachias* is applied with the same uniformity to render the Hebrew *ברכייה* *Berechiah*. Compare *Isai. viii. 2. Zechar. i. 17. Nehem. iii. 4, 20, Jerem. xliii. 3, 6. xlv. 1, 2, &c.* And the example of this version is followed by Josephus himself, as may be found by looking into his *Antiquities*, where he gives an account of the remonstrance of † Berechiah and other princes of Israel, to their brethren that returned from the war, against detaining the numerous captives they had made in Judah, from *2 Chron. xxviii. 12.* and, again, where he mentions the actions and usage of Baruch, from the book of Jeremiah.—

* *J. Antiq. 9. 8. 3. and 2 Chron. xxiv. 17,—22.*

† *Antiq. 9. 12. 2. and 10. 6. 2. &c.*

Further, the Zacharias of the New Testament is a prophet. The connection and scope in Matthew's Gospel direct us to regard him in this light. And the express words in Luke xi. 50, 51. declare him such, 'That the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may come upon this generation, from the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias.' But the Zacharias whom Josephus mentions to have been killed before the Romans surrounded Jerusalem, though said to have been a man who greatly detested, and warmly reproved all manner of wickedness, is not represented to have had any prophetic * commission and endowment, or to have made any claim or pretension to it.—Finally, the murder of the Zacharias in the evangelists, is charged upon the Jews as a national crime. But the death of that Zacharias in Josephus, was the deed of a faction or party, not only without the authority of the legal council or sanhedrim, but even in opposition to the pleasure of that irregular and disorderly one, which had been constituted by them for his trial and condemnation, through a desire of taking away his life with the forms of justice. For they, convinced of his innocence, after all the charges and accusations of his enemies, chose rather to absolve and acquit him, to their confusion and rage, by whom they had been thus created judges, than to bring upon themselves the guilt of his blood, by gratifying their wishes and hopes with a sentence condemning him to suffer capital punishment.

It is then very unreasonable, when there are such instances of disagreement between the persons in

* See De Bello, as above.

the circumstances of parentage, character and fate, merely because the name is the same, to pretend that the Evangelist Matthew makes Jesus tell the Jews his contemporaries under Tiberius, that they had killed a man whom Josephus informs us they did not destroy till more than 30 years after, when Nero had almost done swaying the imperial scepter. And it must be still more unjustifiable, on so slight a ground, to suggest that he wrote in a later period than that in which he is supposed to have written, when through all the length of his treatise, it cannot be manifested that he betrays any unsuitableness to its earlier date in any events, customs, allusions, or phrases which there occur, as difficult as it must have been to have avoided it.—By consequence, the cavil which proceeds upon the supposition that this Zacharias, who was cut off in the temple by the zealots, was intended in Matthew, hath no good foundation*.

* I do not suppose, the reader sees, that Christ spoke of this man even by way of anticipation, through his extraordinary knowledge. For he plainly intended a prophet murdered before, yea murdered by the ancestors of those whom he addressed, and addressed in the way of blaming their conduct; their care, I mean, of the prophets sepulchres, while themselves imitated the cruelty of their fathers who had killed them. Nor is it any objection to this that he says, *whom ye slew*, for this is according to that common figure by which a nation or people is considered as still the same, as in John vi. 32, &c. Besides, how could the Jews have comprehended the sense of his solemn asseveration, if he had designed a person to be killed hereafter? and where would have been the propriety, on this supposition, of the form of speech he uses, to warn them that great miseries would befall them, when many of these miseries would have already overtaken them, before they should contract any guilt by shedding that man's blood. But though I do not think this prophetic interpretation the true sense, I did not reason against it above, because, were it received, no argument

Says Voltaire, however, in the name of his unknown learned men, whose objection he recites, ‘ We meet with no such person as Zacharias killed in the temple before the coming of the Messiah, nor in his time,’ that he may thence infer he can be no other than the Zacharias who fell a sacrifice, according to Josephus, near the end of the Jewish state. But surely this is a mistake. We read undeniably of a Zacharias killed in the temple more than 500 years before the birth of Christ, as must have been already observed, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, 22. And this person I take to be here meant; not Zacharias who flourished after the return of the Jews from Babylon, and whose book makes one among the books of the twelve smaller prophets; for though he is stiled the son of Barachias, like the Zacharias of the evangelists, we have neither any history of his * murder by the Jewish people, nor does it seem probable in itself, they should have committed such an outrage, after their great respect for him, Ezra v. 2. when they had just emerged from that distress and capti-

could be derived from the mention of such Zacharias, against the early age of this gospel.

* I am aware there is mention of a Zacharias, son (or grandson) of Iddo, a great priest and faithful prophet, killed in the sanctuary of the Lord, on the day of expiation, because he reprov'd the people, in the Targum on Lament. ii. 20. which many understand concerning this lesser prophet, from comparing Ezra v. 1. and Zechar. i. 7. But it is probable Zacharias, who perished under Joash, is meant; and that he is called the son of Iddo only by mistake of the author, or his transcriber, since the accounts of their death do so exactly tally: to which add, this very passage of the Lamentations is in many other places expounded by the Jewish masters, of the son of Jehoiada. See Lightfoot's Works, i. 237. and Michaelis Annot. in locum.

vity with which God punished them, for misusing his former prophets and messengers: far less Zacharias, father of the Baptist, for whose violent death in the temple by Herod, we have no better authority than a tale of Epiphanius, who comes too late, since he flourished only about the year of our Lord 370, and was too credulous to justify our entire reliance upon his testimony, were that piece where it is found really his, which is after all very doubtful.

It is true, the Zacharias in Chronicles is not called the son of Barachias, but the son of Jehoiada. But, though we should not suppose that the name Barachias was substituted for Jehoiada * in the text of Matthew's Gospel, by some ignorant but zealous transcriber, who recollected no Zacharias except that one among the minor prophets, whose father was so called, nor have recourse to any other violent solution, this disagreement between the writer of Chronicles and of the Gospel, can create little difficulty. For, as it was no uncommon thing among the Jews, for places to have two or more names, neither was it unusual for persons to have two or more appellations, of which some examples are produced below †. Why then might not the father of Zacharias,

* To this purpose it has been observed, that the Gospel of the Nazarenes read the son of Jehoiada here, instead of the son of Barachias, in Jerome's time.

† Thus Jehoahaz, 2 Kings xxiii. 30. is Shallum, Jer. xxii. 11. Ner, the grandfather of Saul, is also Abiel, 1 Chron. ix. 39. 1 Sam. ix. 1. Azariah the son of Oded, is also Oded, 2 Chron. xv. 1, 8. Uzziah, king of Judah, is also called Azariah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1. 2 Kings xv. 1, 2. Matthew is Levi, Mat. ix. 9. Mark ii. 14. Luke

who had his tragical exit under Joash, be named Barachias as well as Jehoiada, especially when both names are of equivalent signification? Upon allowing this, all objection vanishes. And what colour of argument can there be against it, since there is a perfect correspondence between the Zacharias described in the gospels, and the Zacharias mentioned in Chronicles, in other circumstances? Does Christ speak of a Zacharias who was a prophet? such was Zacharias in Chronicles, 2 Chron. xxiv. 19, 20. Does he speak of a Zacharias slain by the Jews? This was his end, 'The people,' on his reproof of their idolatry, and denunciation of divine wrath against them, 'conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king.—Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son,' v. 21, 22. Once more, does our Saviour speak of a Zacharias killed between the temple and the altar? It is said that that Zacharias, son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people when he addressed to them these words which provoked them, was killed in the court of the house of the Lord, that is, in the inner court, or court of the priests, which was beyond that of the Israelites, and in which, near the entrance of the sanctuary, or most holy place, stood the altar of burnt offering, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. Only Christ adds, which might be agreeable to received traditionary or written information, that, having fled thither from their violence and fury, he was put to death in that place of the

v. 27, &c. Why then might not Jehoiada be also Barachiah. The former of which signifies, *the Lord knows*; the other, *the Lord blesses*.

court which lay between this altar and the holy of holies*; by consequence in the vicinity, and under the observation of God himself, who resided there by a visible glory or brightness over the ark his symbol, which did not a little aggravate and inflame their guilt. Of his death also, the Jews speak much in their † Talmud. And it is obvious there was a fitness in our Saviour's selecting him, whatever righteous men, and even prophets, might have been killed by them in succeeding times, before his own appearance in the flesh, when he used the phraseology here to admonish them of great calamities, as he is the last prophet whose murder is mentioned in their sacred books, and the only one of whom we read that he required vengeance for the effusion of his blood before he expired, even as we do, that Abel's blood cried for it, after it was shed.

Here then is another Zacharias killed in the temple, many ages before the coming of the Messiah, who answers very well the description in Matthew. We may therefore be satisfied, notwithstanding Mr. Voltaire's assertion, that it could agree to none but one slain long after Jesus's death, into whose mouth both this evangelist and Luke puts the fact, that Matthew wrote as early ‡ as is supposed, without having re-

* This is the frequent sense of *ναος*, the term in the gospels turned *temple*, while *ιερον* signifies the whole sacred building with its courts, or any part exclusive of that. So Joseph. Antiq. 9. 1, 2. Jehosaphat is said to have gathered the people of Jerusalem into the *ιερον*, and to have prayed standing with his face toward the *ναος* or holy of holies, *κατα προσωπον τυ ναυ*.

† See Lightfoot's Works, vol. 2. page 1140. and Talmud. Exercitations on Matth. vol. 1. page 237. also his Sermons, page 1120. Michaelis Annot. in 2 Chron. xxiv. 21.

‡ See note, page 508.

course, for the solution of any difficulty here, to the infinite difference between books divinely inspired and such as are merely human, which he only acknowledges * by way of scoff and sarcasm.

SECTION VI.

Of his calling Toldos Jeshut quite contrary to our gospels, and making it a more antient writing.

I AM now hastening to a conclusion of this work; but ere I end, must also take notice of a remarkable

* As Mr. Voltaire here has supposed St. Matthew to make Christ speak of a Zacharias, who was not slain till almost 40 years after his death; so in his article Messiah of the same Dictionary, he makes Gamaliel speak of a Theudas, who did not appear till long after these deliberations were held, at which he assisted, 'The wise Gamaliel,' says he, 'Acts, v. 34. mentions one named Theudas, whose history is to be found in Josephus's antiquities, lib. 20. c. 2.' See *ibid.* page 273. But it is plain he gives this interpretation of the passage, in like manner, by way of ridicule. For, he could never believe Gamaliel intended him, whose imposture and ruin Josephus relates. Josephus's Theudas arose not till Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, under the emperor Claudius, about the fourty-fourth year of the Christian aera. Gamaliel, in his speech made eight or ten years sooner, mentions a Theudas who had given disturbance, and been slain at that time; yea before the time of the tumults and commotions which Judas of Galilee raised, who seduced much people in the days of the assessment or *census*, when Judea was reduced to the state of a Roman province. They must therefore have been two different persons of the same name. Accordingly, this is the general sense of learned men. And why might there not be two deceivers in that country of one name, in the compass of 40 years, with such similarity in character and fate, as this hypothesis requires? None will think this an unlikely or improbable thing, who look into the late excellent Dr. Lardner's *Credibility*, part 1. book 2. chap. 7. p. 921—940. to whose work I therefore refer the reader.

stroke against our gospels, in one of his latest publications, I mean his ‘ Letters on eminent Writers.’ There,* says he, ‘ The Toldos Jeschut is the most ancient Jewish writing that has been transmitted to us against our religion. It is a life of Jesus quite contrary to our holy gospels. For the author makes no mention of them; and probably he would have tried to refute them, if he had known any thing of them. He makes Jesus the adulterous son of Miriam, or Mariah, and of a foldier called Joseph Panther, or Panther.’ Thus he relates to us the infamous original which this book gives Jesus, asserts its total repugnance to the history of him by the evangelists, and at the same time insinuates it is more worthy of credit and belief, as a writing of superior antiquity, and greater nearness to his age of whom it treats.

But is this book, of the generations of Jesus, (for that is the import of its Hebrew title, ספר תולדות ישו *Sepher Toldoth Jesbu*,) so contrary to our gospels, as from his manner of expressing himself upon the subject, and from the specimen he gives of its contents, every reader will naturally imagine? Or has it that title to veneration and respect, from its being a work of more early date than our gospels, which he invests it with? I think neither of these will be found true.

That there is not an absolute and entire disagreement between it and our gospels, will appear from the following account, which the reader may rely on as exact, being formed from the perusal of the He-

brew copy of the piece, printed by * Wagenfeil with a Latin translation.

It allows Jesus to have been born at Bethlehem, and to have wrought miracles. In particular, it represents him to have restored a dead man to life, and a leper † to soundness, on three different occasions, and on the last of these, to have also made two millstones swim upon the Jordan, while he himself, moreover, sitting hereon, caught fishes, and gave of them unto the multitudes present, that they might eat. It describes the people, on seeing the two first miracles, to have fallen down and worshipped him, saying, 'Thou art altogether the son of God,' It re-

* See tom. 2 Wagenfeil, 'Tela ignea Satanae,' where is also a confutation of it, as well as of the *Carmen Lipmanni*, (which is an abridgment of the Jewish treatise against our religion stiled *Nizzachon*, or Victory,) though not of *Ghissuk Emanah*, another very wicked piece there also printed, of which Dr. Kidder hath often made mention, to refute its objections, in his *Demonstration of the Messiah*.

† The first miracles are thus related, 'Having complained of these men who called him a bastard, and pretended he was of an impure original, and having asserted that he was the son of God, and that Isaiah prophesied of him, "Behold a virgin shall conceive." He said before the people at Bethlehem of Judah, the place of his nativity, Bring hither to me a dead man, I will recover him to life. The people hasten, and digging up a grave, find nothing there but dry bones: when they reported this to him, he said, 'Bring them forth into the midst;' these being brought him, he joins each of the bones, and covers them with skin, flesh, and nerves, so that he arose who was before a carcase, and stood on his feet. When men saw it they wondered; then he said, 'Do ye marvel at these things, bring me some leper, I will heal him;' and when they had placed a leper before him, he in like manner healed him, by the ineffable name; which when men saw, they fell down, and worshipped him, saying, 'Thou art the son of God.' pp. 7. 8.

lates, that he rode into Jerusalem on an ass, which was brought to him at his own desire, and that all the city broke forth to meet him, when lifting up his voice, he said, ‘ Zechariah the prophet foretold ‘ concerning me, Behold thy king will come to thee ‘ just, and * saved, and poor, sitting upon an ass, and upon a colt, the son of asses.’ It makes him apply these predictions to himself, ‘ Isaiah prophesied ‘ of me, The lame man shall leap as an hart. Of me ‘ my great progenitor David spake these words, The ‘ Lord said unto me, thou art my son, this day I have ‘ begotten thee; and again in another place, The ‘ Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right- ‘ hand; for now will I ascend to my heavenly fa- ‘ ther, and sit at his right-hand, and ye shall ‘ behold it with your eyes;’ added he, in pre- ‘ sence of the elders and wise men of Jerusalem.— It declares, that one Juda mixed himself into his train, with a mischievous design, that Jesus went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, that the religious men were glad when Juda said to them he would betray him into their hands, and that the man before whom he should prostrate himself was Jesus, wherefore they should play the men, and behave courageously, and take him. Accordingly, Juda does so. Next day he prostrates himself before him, and all the citizens of Jerusalem being armed, apprehend him. It sets forth, that his disciples hereon fled hither and thither, and broke forth into bitter weeping, that the elders of Jerusalem led him into the city,

* The Hebrew word in Zechar. ix. 9. is נִשְׁחָן *Neshan*, which many Christian commentators also render *saved* instead of Saviour, as Vulgate, or ‘ having salvation,’ as we do.

and tied him to a marble pillar, and scourged him, that they next took sharp thorns, and plaiting a crown of them, put it on his head; then being compelled by thirst, he says, 'Give me a little water to drink,' therefore there was given him sharp vinegar; this being drunk, he began to cry with a great cry, 'About me David my progenitor prophesied, 'And they gave gall for my meat, and in my thirst 'vinegar to drink.' That Jeshu wept bitterly, and complained, 'My God, my God, wherefore hast thou forsaken me.' Then the elders said, 'If thou be the 'son of God, why dost thou not free thyself from 'our hands?' Jeshu answered, 'My blood shall expiate men. So Isaiah foretold, And by his stripes 'there is healing to us.'—That they placed him before the greater and lesser sanhedrim, where he was sentenced to be stoned and hanged, that the day was both the preparation of the passover, and of the sabbath, when he was put to death by stoning, and afterwards hanged upon a great stalk of cabbage, having so enchanted all the trees, that none would support his weight. That about evening the wise men said, 'It is not lawful to violate one letter of the 'law about this bastard, let us do to him what the 'law enjoins;' therefore they buried him where he was stoned. That when his friends found the body removed, which was done by Juda, fearing, because they gathered and lamented, that they would steal him, they gave out that he was risen, and gone to heaven, as he had said, whereon Juda shewed him.—That, however, the religion, contrary to the Jewish, increased and spread greatly; for twelve men went forth through twelve kingdoms publishing false-

hoods, whom some of the Israelites, yea, a great multitude adhered to. That the sect was called Nazarene.

Such is the account given in this book, which, though somewhat long, I hope will not be disagreeable to the generality of readers, as no such transcript from it is, according to my knowledge, extant in the English tongue.—And now, is it not plain to all, whatever abominable falsehoods are in the piece, that there is not such a total contrariety to the history of the evangelists, as Mr. Voltaire's manner of speaking led to conceive? It is acknowledged, that Jeshu, by whom is intended our Jesus, was born at Bethlehem, wrought * miracles, entered Jerusalem on an ass, there being a general concourse of the citizens on the occasion. That one Juda, by whom is meant Judas the traitor, was in his retinue, proposed to betray him into the hands of the religious men among the Jews, and did so at Jerusalem, when he had repaired to it to keep the passover, marking him out to them, that they might lay hold on him, by the promised signal of falling down before him, which every one knows to have been a token of high re-

* That he wrought miracles, is also confess'd in the Latin translation of Toldoth Jeshu, which Raymundus Martini, who lived in the end of the thirteenth century, first published in his *Pugio Fidei*, and from him others, as Salvator and Luther, though it differs much from Wagenfeil's copy. For he is there said to have made a lame man, who had never stood, arise and stand on his feet, to have healed a leper, and restored a dead man to life, to have made birds, which some Galileans had formed of clay, fly, to have caused a great millstone, which he had caused be thrown into the sea, stand upon the surface of the waters, and himself to have walked on the face of the sea. See that treatise as published also by Wagenfeil from Martini, or in Martini's own book.

spect. That his disciples fled at his arrest. That the elders of Jerusalem scourged him, and crowned him with thorns, and gave him vinegar to drink in his thirst. That he cried out, ‘ My God, my God, why ‘ hast thou forsaken me?’ That they derided his pretensions to be the son of God, bidding him, in proof of it, save himself from their power. That they put him to death, and hanged him, on the day which was the preparation of the sabbath and of the passover. That, lest their law should be broken, they buried him about the evening. That his body was not found in the grave. That his disciples, twelve in number, published he was risen, and ascended to heaven, and gained many to the belief of it. This, instead of an entire repugnancy, is such a coincidence with the account of the gospels, as must strike every person who is acquainted with them. Our author then, ought not to have said, ‘ This piece was a life of Jesus Christ quite contrary to our holy gospels ;’ since virulent as it is, in other respects, it bears testimony to many facts which they contain; yea facts so honourable to the author of our religion, and so important in the Christian scheme, that the concession of them by Jews; whose fathers were the first, and most inveterate enemies of our faith, must for ever confound and puzzle modern infidels, and be considered by us as no mean argument† on the side of the

† It seems very reasonable thus to improve any accounts of facts which we meet with in this book, agreeable to the relations contained in our gospel, as arguments of their truth; for to what could such accounts in it be owing? not to any favourable prepossession toward the cause of Christianity, but to the force of truth, or to a reverence of some traditions about him, which they looked upon as too authentic

evangelical history, since they could not want inclination, even in however remote an age from his time the work was composed, to have denied them, unless they had looked on them as true.

In the same manner, whereas Mr. Voltaire gives this piece very great antiquity, and supposes the author not to have known any thing of our gospels, because he hath not mentioned them, and tried to refute them, it is manifest that it is of no such old date, and that the writer was not unacquainted with them. The resemblance and likeness of facts which is so observable from the representation just given, creates a suspicion of this. And the same is further confirmed by this circumstance, that one Simon Kephā is introduced saying to the Nazarenes (that is the followers of Jeshu) when he would dissuade them from doing any hurt to the Jews, ‘ If a Jew * say to ‘ a Nazerene, Go with me one mile, he ought to accompany him two miles; and if a Jew smite a Nazerene on the left cheek, he ought to turn to him ‘ also the right cheek:’ for this looks like the language of one that had read † Mat. v. 39,—41. But

and certain to be contradicted. So, though the testimony of enemies is disregarded, which is to the prejudice or ruin of persons who are the objects of their malice and hatred, it hath always been thought of great weight when it was in their favour, to whom they bore no good will.

* Toldoth Wagenfeil, page 22.

† These words of our Saviour, which some are ready to sneer at, are only a proverbial admonition, that persons ought to bear small injuries and affronts without retaliating, rather than enter into strife and contention for slight and trivial infringements of their property, or liberty, or honour. And how far the evils done, are of this diminutive nature, every one must judge for himself, as in the sight of God. Our

that it is a far later work than our gospels, appears further from these considerations.

It must have been framed after the Talmud, for it makes mention of it. Thus, at the beginning, the author having told us that Joseph Pander, of the tribe of Judah, a tall profligate fellow, dwelt in Bethlehem of Judah, and that a certain widow lived near to his house called מִרְיָם *Miriam*, subjoins, ‘ This ‘ is that Miriam the dresser of women’s hair, who is ‘ mentioned in the Talmud.’ Now tho’ the word *Talmud* sometimes denotes the Mishna, or collection of Jewish traditions so called, which is thought to have been compiled by Rabbi Jehudah Hakkadosh, about, or after the middle of, the second century from the birth of Christ, it must here signify the Gemara, or commentaries upon that text, as indeed, in this sense, the term is generally used. The reason

Saviour never intended to say that we might not reprove and check by remonstrance, wrongs similar to those which he here mentions, more especially in some circumstances, as is evident from his own behaviour when he was illegally smitten upon his trial, John xviii. 22, 23. and from his apostles replies before the council, Acts xxiii. 3,—5. But we are rather to expose ourselves to the hazard of a repetition of little indignities, and losses, and constraints, than have recourse to violence, or even appeal to the civil magistrate, and involve ourselves in all the vexations and charges of a law-suit. And is this any more than what every prudent man practises for his own ease and tranquillity in life?—To multitudes who had a vest and a cloak, or mantle, likewise, taking away a vest would be an inconsiderable damage, when it was customary for all in more wealthy circumstances, to accumulate a great variety of habits, or suits of apparel; to which manner, there is an allusion, Mat. vi. 19, 20. and James v. 2. Lucullus had five thousand changes of garments in his wardrobe, Horat. Epist. lib. 1. epist. 6., line 40,—44.

is, that only there, and not in the Mishna*, nay, not even in the Jerusalem Gemara, or Talmud, which, however, was not completed before the year of our Lord 300, but in the Babylonish, which was not finished till the 500 year of Christ, or beginning of the sixth century, is there mention of Mary or Miriam, the plaister of womens hair†. By consequence this piece must have been written since that time.

Again, the story in it about Jesus, is, in many instances, very different from the accounts which the ancient Jews gave of him, according to Christian writers in the primitive times, and according to their own Talmudical books. It is well known, though the works of the early adversaries of our faith are lost, which is only a fate common to them, with many apologies and defences thereof by its friends, yet there are fragments of them preserved in the writings of the Christian fathers. Now from them, their notions about Jesus may be learned. Accordingly, we find by Origen's book against Celsus, ' That Celsus † personating, or assuming the character of a Jew, pretended he was born of a poor woman, a native of Judea, who was cast out by her husband, a carpenter, as guilty of

* Whether there is any reference at all to the affairs of Christians in the Mishna, is much disputed. Wagenfeil strenuously contends there is none, and observes, though Buxtorf in his Talmudic Lexicon, makes the Mishnah speak of the feasts of Christians, the word in the original is גוֹיִם *Gojim*, which signifies the Gentiles, or nations. See Wagenf. Confut. Toldoth. page 10.

† The passages relating to her, are quoted in Lighfoot's Works, vol. 2. page 270.

‡ Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 1. page 22. and *ibid*, page 25.

‘ adultery ; and that having served in Egypt for hire, on account of his poverty, where he learned some powerful arts, for which the Egyptians were famous, he returned, elated on account of his abilities, and asserted that for them he ought to be acknowledged as a god.’ And it is elsewhere said of him there, ‘ That he believed he was begotten by one Panthera, who corrupted the virgin.’ In the Talmud again, the Jews represent him to have been begotten upon a woman called Mary * (or Miriam) a plaiter of womens hair, by the violence of Pandira † the paranymp, while her own husband, Paphus, forebore to approach her, on account of her legal pollution, at the time of marriage.—They describe him, further, to have gone into Egypt, and learned magical arts ; for it is said, ‘ Did not † Ben Satda (the son of Satda) bring enchantments out of Egypt, in the cutting which was in his flesh.’——They make him to have had only five disciples §, who were all slain in Judea.—And, finally, they tell us,

* She was also called Stada, or Satda, because she had turned aside from her own husband, or been unchaste. They said in Pumbedith, a school in the land of Babylon on the Euphrates, she departed.

† See Massachet Calla cited by Wagenfeil, page 14, 15. and Lardner’s Testim. i. 189,—199.

‡ See Shabbat, fol. 104. 2. where the gloss says, the reason of the cutting in the flesh was, he could not bring them away in writing, because the priests diligently searched all who went out, that they might not carry enchantments or magical arts with them to men in other nations, as quoted Lardner’s Testim. i. 190, 194. Lightfoot’s Talmud, and Hebrew Exercit. 111, 112. and Wagenfeil, ubi supra, p. 17.

§ Lardner, 195. Wagenfeil, 17, 18. and compare Lightfoot on Mat. ix. 9.

he was § hanged in Lud, or Lydda, on the evening of the passover, after he was stoned; a cryer having made this proclamation before him for forty days, ' This man comes forth to be stoned, because he ' dealt in forceries, and persuaded and seduced Israel: whosoever knows any defence for him, let ' him appear and produce it,' and no defence having been found.

But how different the narrative about Jesus, in the piece under our consideration, from the tales of Celsus, and the Talmudical writers! This one is indeed also begotten by Pandira on Mary, or Miriam, who remonstrates against all intercourse, from the Mosaic prohibition; but then he is admitted through a mistake that he was Johanan, the bridegroom, or young person, to whom her mother had contracted her *.—Moreover, he is not said to go into Egypt at all, and to work miracles at his return through his acquisition of magical skill there; but to have arrived to his power of performing them, by learning the ineffable name of God in the temple of Jerusalem. ' At that time,' says Toldoth, ' there was in the

§ See Sanhedrim, fol. 43. quoted by Lightfoot on Mat. xxvii. 31. and Sanhedrim, fol. 67. quoted by Lardner, 198, &c. and Wagenseil, page 19, 25.

* It is not then exactly true what some have said, that the Talmudic story of Christ's origin is adopted by the author of Toldoth Jeshu. I might have added, that, according to Toldoth, Johanan, the bridegroom, when he understood Mary had been defiled, informed against her to Simcon Shetahides, who discovered it to other wise men, his colleagues. But according to the Talmud, she herself confessed it to Rabbi Akiba, who declared it to other wise men. Again, the master of Jesus in Toldoth, is Elhanan; but in Talmud, is R. Joshua, the son of Petahiah, who carried him into Egypt.

‘ temple of Jerufalem, the שם המפורש *Shem Ham-phorash*, or ineffable name of God, engraven on a stone of the foundation: for when David dug the foundation, he discovered there a certain stone on the mouth of the abyfs which contained it, and lifting it up, he deposited it in the holy of holies, where it was guarded by brazen lions before the door, which the wife men had made, through their enchantments, to fend forth fuch roaring noife, that whoever fhould enter and learn the name would forget it. Jeshu having come from Galilee, entered the temple fecretly, and learned it, and infcribed it on a piece of parchment, and, cutting his flefh, hid it there, having firft pronounced the name, that he might not feel pain. Immediately, pronouncing it again, he caufed the flefh to coalefce.— When he was going out through the door, the lions † roared, wherefore he forgot the name; but when he was out of the city, he opened the flefh, took out the writing, and having thoroughly weighed the characters, he recovered his knowledge of the name, whereon he wrought miracles.’ Agreeably, it is exprefsly mentioned, when he healed the firft leper, after reftoring the firft dead man to life, ‘ In like manner he reftored him to foundnefs by the ineffable name.’ So too, at the cure of the fecond leper, it is taken notice of, that he pronounced ‡ it. And

† Wagenfeil turns it, ‘ The dogs barked;’ but the Hebrew word is the fame as before, אריות *arjoth*, leones.

‡ Thus alfo in Raymund’s copy, where is the like account of Jeshu’s learning the name, it is particularly remarked, he did thofe different miracles above recited from it, by pronouncing the fame.

it is every where supposed § through the work, that he owed his power of miracles to it; as, indeed, it is also related there, that another, named Juda in Wagenfeil's copy, but in Raymundus's Juda Scariot, opposed or withstood him, by learning it also.—To proceed, Jeshu in Toldoth, instead of five disciples, all put to death in Judea, has twelve, who leaving Judea, fill twelve kingdoms with their error and superstition.—Here also, instead of having a trial in legal form, and the execution of the sentence delayed forty days, having been taken by surprize, he is immediately delivered to die * by the elders of the sanhedrim.—And, finally, here, instead of being stoned and hanged at Lud, a town situated, according to Lightfoot, near the Phenician shore, at the distance of about a day's journey from Jerusalem, which is the Talmudical representation, (without one word, however, of the stock of cabbage on which Tol-

§ Toldoth, indeed, reasons thus, where I have marked the omission of some words in quoting; ' But he must have entred the temple by ' magical art and force of enchantments, otherwise how would the ' priests have suffered him to enter? He must then have done all these ' things by the assistance of an impure name, and by magical art.' But there is not a word of his going into Egypt, and being instructed in it there. Nor is one miracle ever ascribed to any thing but the ineffable name of God, of which he had learned the true sound.

* The story in Wagenfeil's Toldoth runs thus: That Juda having cut Jeshu's flesh with a knife, and stole out the parchment when he was asleep, through the help of some inchantments which he used, persuaded him afterwards to go to Jerusalem secretly, and learn the name. That, when he had gone thither, from a desire of concealment, dressed in garments like to those which his disciples wore to a hair's breadth, so that it was impossible to distinguish him from them, Juda procured him to be seized next day, and straightway put to death.

doth says he was suspended, because he had so enchanted all trees, that none would bear his weight) he is stoned and hanged at Jerusalem itself.—This book, then, which gives an account so different and inconsistent with that given by the Jews in their Talmud, and before it, in Celsus's work, about Jesus, while at the same time, it appeals to that as speaking concerning his mother, must be of a more recent date, and by consequence, be far inferior in point of its age, to our gospels. Its fictions were not then known nor received by the unbelievers among that nation. If we rely upon Wagenfeil, the rude traces of it are first to be seen in a book written by Agobard archbishop of Lyons, concerning Jewish superstitions, and in a treatise of the once celebrated Rabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mentz, that is, about the year 800; for then these writers flourished. However, they are very far short, as the learned reader will perceive below *.

* Ibid. Says Maurus, ' Jesum filium ethnici cujusdam Pandera aduli vi more latronum punitum esse, aiunt. Clamante vero ac jubente magistro eorum Josua celeriter de ligno depositum; et in quodam horto caulibus pleno in sepulchro projectum, ne terra eorum contaminaretur. Iterum de sepulchro extractum, et retorta cervice per totam civitatem tractum, sicque projectum: et propter hoc usque hodie sepulchrum ejus stare vacuum,' &c. According to Agobard, ' In doctrinis majorum suorum Judaei legunt Iesum juvenem quendam fuisse apud eos honorabilem, et magisterio Joannis Baptistae eruditum quamplures habuisse discipulos, quorum uni, propter duritiem et hebetudinem sensus, *Kephæ* vel *Petrae* nomen imposuit; ad extremum vero propter plura mendacia accusatum, Tiberii judicio in carcerem reclusum,—veluti magum detestabilem fuisse suspensum atque hoc modo occisum, juxta quendam aquae ductum sepultum, et Judaeo cuidam ad custodiam commendatum. Noctu vero, subita aquae ductus in-

Finally, though Mr. Voltaire intimate it is more worthy of belief than our gospels, must it not appear, in comparison, undeserving of all credit with every person of probity and candour? Is there not a most glaring contradiction between the different copies of the book itself? To omit lesser instances; in the book published by Raymundus, whose integrity in reciting Jewish books, so far as I know or recollect, hath never been suspected, Queen Helena is spoken of as a stranger, altogether unacquainted with Jewish affairs, and as an enemy to Jesus, who sent soldiers to seize him, and who, when she had gotten him into her power, delivered him into the hands of the Jews, that they might deal with him according to their wishes. But in Wagenfeil's, she is represented as a kinswoman of Jesu, so of Jewish extraction and parentage, as favourable to him while he lived, and as angry at the wise men of the nation for killing him without her advice.—In the same book, published by Raymundus, the stone on which the name of God was written; instead of being spoken of as that which covered the mouth of the abyss, so that the safety of all men, and of all nature depended on it, which is the description in Wagenfeil's copy, is called simply, the stone on which the ark of the Lord of old rested: while, again, in Buxtorf's copy of the work, according to a citation from it, in his Talmudical dictionary, it is declared to be the very stone which our father Jacob anointed with oil,

'datione, sublatum, Pilati jussu per 12 lunas quaesitum, nec usquam inventum;' and then he goes on to Pilate's ordering to adore him as risen. See these writers quoted by Wagenfeil, *Confut. Toldoth.* 12, 13. and *Confer. Bibliothec. Patrum.* tom. 9.

after sleeping on it as his pillow.—Again, doth it not contain the most ridiculous fables? for example, that of the great cabbage stock; to abate our astonishment at which, Raymund's book adds a tale of one in the house of the sanctuary, which yields every year one hundred pounds weight of seed: tho', according to the accounts of travellers, cabbage-stocks there are not much superior in size and height to those in Britain;—That of a stone's being deposited in the holy of holies, on which was written the four lettered name of God, by learning whereof, persons might bring desolation on the world, and do whatever they would;—That of their wise men making lions which should give alarm at a person's coming out of the temple after the acquisition of the ineffable name, in spite of all his magical skill, but give none when he entered it with the mischievous intention of acquainting himself with it;—That of God's favouring a magician to learn his name, and through it defeat their contrivances, (as thus he was enabled to escape unobserved by the watch of priests and Levites which was continually kept in the temple, and engaged in going round with burning torches, even through the night, and to open unperceived those vast gates described by Josephus to require the force of 200 men to shut them,) though not indeed without needing to cut his flesh, when yet he had ordered such to be punished with death by his law, *Exod. xxii. 17*;—That of making another Jew defeat and ruin Jesus by coming to the knowledge of the name which he had, when none of the Jews ever employed this expedient, powerful as it must have been, for the protection of their holy temple and

country against their enemies.—Further, how irreconcilable with all history the narrative of this book? I will not insist on the negative argument, that no such stone, memorable as it must have been, is mentioned either by the sacred authors, or Josephus, in their minute accounts of the building of the temple.—But, how comes David to have found this stone in digging the foundation of the temple, and to have lodged it in the holy of holies; when it is certain it was only the work of Solomon his son to begin and finish that sacred edifice? Could Jesus suffer when Jannæus's queen ruled over Judea after the death of her husband, which happened in the 675th year of Rome, before the time of any of the Cæsars, when it is evident from Tacitus*, that he underwent capital punishment only in the time of the emperor Tiberius, the third of the Cæsars, by order of Pontius Pilate, his procurator in that country, which, sometime before, had been made a Roman province, that is, not till more than a hundred years after her reign?—Once more, is it not a matter of public notoriety, allowed by the enemies of Christianity from the most antient times, that Jesus, instead of being stoned to death and then hanged, according to the Mosaic law, was put to death by crucifixion?

Surely then, no wise and impartial man can hesitate a moment whether he should give the preference to the evangelical history beyond this Toldoth Jeshu, a work so remote in the æra of its composition from the time of Jesus's birth, and life, and

* Annal. xv. 44. Auctor nominis ejus (Christiani) Christus, qui Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat.

death; so inconsistent † in its different copies; so stuffed with monstrous tales, and so contrary ‡ to histories of approved accuracy and fidelity.

If Mr. Voltaire do indeed receive this book, while he rejects our gospels, he is in this, as in some other § articles, an example of the most blameable and

† I once thought that the *Toldoth Jeshu*, published by Huldric, 1705, was a different copy of the same book, and had observed, on the authority of Dr. Sharp, in his argument for Christianity from concessions of enemies, page 40, that it gives an account of ‘the king’s order to kill every infant in Bethlehem, which was accordingly done:’ while of this there is no mention in *Wagenfeil’s* or in *Raymund’s* copy; looking on this as another instance how much the different copies of the same book varied from each other. But I now find that *Basnage*, in his history of the Jews, speaks of that book as the work of a different author; and indeed from the representation he hath made of it, it appears to be such. For it makes Jesus born under King Herod, from whose massacre of the children in Bethlehem, he only escaped by flight into Egypt, and to have died under him too. See *History of the Jews*, b. 4. c. 28. But having had no opportunity of seeing the book itself, I forbear making more extracts.

‡ I might have also remarked, that the story of Simon Kepha is such, who is described to have gone to the metropolis of the Nazarenes (meaning Rome) after Christ’s death; to have gathered a multitude of them to him as sand on the sea-shore; to have exhorted them to forbear killing Jews; to have appointed the celebration of the days of Christ’s passion, and ascension, and birth, and circumcision; and to have died in a tower they built for him at his desire: all which agrees ill with the persecuted scattered state of Jesus’s followers then, and the account of the introduction of these festivals in the church.

§ Thus in his *Philosophy of History*, chap. 18. page 86, &c. he says, ‘That the Chinese annals carry with them the stamp of certainty, if any annals do, the history of heaven and earth being in them united, and each reign of their emperors being written by contemporaries.’ And having added, ‘that they are confirmed by the unanimous opinion of our travellers of different sects, Jacobins, Jesuits,

absurd credulity, at the same time that he studies to cast the reproach of it upon others; even as some of his sceptical brethren have betrayed a great degree of

‘Lutherans, Calvinists, all interested in contradicting them,’ he scruples not, upon their authority, to pronounce it evident, that the empire of China was formed upwards of four thousand years ago: yea, he concludes that the Chinese must have been a body of people for antecedent ages. He also observes, that he may destroy the credit of the scripture account of the flood, before which he thus assembles them, ‘This people of antiquity never heard any mention made of those inundations, the slight remembrance of which is preserved and changed in the fable of the deluge of Deucalion.’ Nevertheless, prone as our author is to rely upon the annals of this nation, as indeed he is upon every tale that contradicts scripture, whoever reads what Fourmont in his *Reflexions Critiques sur l’Histoire des Anciens Peuples*, the authors of the *Antient Universal History*, vol. 20. page 109, &c. and others, have opposed to the pretensions which the Chinese make to so high antiquity, will be satisfied that these annals deserve no such regard as he pays to them. I further remark, that even Father du Halde, who professes himself a zealous admirer of the Chinese chronology, disagrees with him about the original of their empire; for he places Fohi its founder, about 200 years after the flood, according to the Greek version; which is about 800 years after it according to the Hebrew calculation, that making the flood to have happened in the 2262, but this in the 1656 year of the world. Nor does Father Regis, who died at Pekin only in the 37th year of this present century, make him to have reigned much earlier; for he only raises him 120 years beyond Du Halde. Further, Monsieur Voyeu de Brunen informs us that the Chinese themselves look on the history of the times antecedent or previous to the institution of their cycle of 60 years, which he, as well as Monsieur Regis, acknowledges to have been contrived but about 1300 years after the deluge, and according to which, they only counted the year of Christ 1750 the 47th year of the 67th cycle, (an evidence that the first cycle did not reach back to that inundation) to be very uncertain and dubious. Finally, Monsieur Freret, speaking of their annals, says, ‘They consist of two parts, whose authenticity and credit are very different. That part which begins about 200 years before Christ’s birth,

enthusiasm *, while they were desirous to fix the imputation upon believers in Christ's religion. For all circumstances do concur to overthrow the authority of this book, but our gospels have the strongest claim to credibility.

was written upon contemporary memoirs, and underwent before it was published a very accurate examination, so it may be considered as accompanied with the strongest evidence, but that part which precedes this period hath little certainty in it. See *Memoires de l' Academie Royal des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, tom. xv. p. 57. and *Bibliothèque des Sciences*, tom. 7. p. 367.

* I allude to the story which Lord Herbert of Cherbury, the first deistical writer in England, tells us of himself, as it is published by Dr. Leiland, in his *View of the Deistical writers*, vol. 1. p. 43. from a manuscript life of that author, which had been communicated to him. As it is in itself very remarkable, and as it may be a caveat to some persons of a very opposite character and complexion to Lord Herbert, who are too ready to look for, and lay stress upon signs from heaven, or strong inward impressions as guides of their judgment and conduct, and thereby to expose both their understanding and their piety to reproach, I shall not hesitate to transcribe the passage, beseeching them at the same time to make a due use of it, that they may retrieve their credit and honour. It runs thus, ' Being doubtful (he means about the publication of his book, *De Veritate Religionis*, i. e. concerning the truth of religion,) ' in my chamber one fair day in the summer, my casement being open ' towards the south, the sun shining clear, and no wind stirring, I took ' my book *De Veritate* in my hands, and kneeling on my knees, devoutly said these words, ' O thou eternal God, author of this light ' which now shines upon me, and giver of all inward illumination. I ' beseech thee, of thine infinite goodness, to pardon a greater request ' than a sinner ought to make. I am not satisfied enough, whether I ' shall publish this book : if it be for thy glory, I beseech thee, give ' me some sign from heaven ; if not, I shall suppress it.' I had no ' sooner spoken these words, but a loud, though yet gentle noise, came ' forth from the heavens, (for it was like nothing on earth,) which ' did so cheer and comfort me, that I took my petition as granted, and

These are books which have been handed down to us from the beginning, as the works of these four persons, from whom they are denominated, two of them the apostles and intimate companions of Jesus, and two of them, again, their familiar acquaintances.—They are free from every thing in their stile, which is unsuitable to the * age in which they are

‘ that I had the sign I demanded; whereupon also I resolved to print my book. This, how strange soever it may seem, I protest before the Eternal God is true; neither am I any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only clearly hear the noise, but in the sereneest sky that I ever saw, being without all cloud, did to my thinking see that place from whence it came.’ Here we see he desires an interposition of providence by some preternatural event to direct him, and, warmed with an opinion of the importance of his book to promote the glory of God, as was natural for its author, he fancies he received a signal to publish it by some noise in the air, which might proceed from a variety of natural causes. How would Deists have been ready to exult and triumph in it, as an evidence of fanaticism and weakness of mind, if any apologist for Christianity had related such a scene as he has done, for encouraging him to print a defence of it?

* This was with regard to them all, before the end of the century about the thirty-third or thirty-fourth year of which Christ died, and with regard to three of them, the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, beyond dispute, long before its conclusion. About this date of the gospels, we have the unanimous testimony of the antient church, which, in a fact of this nature, hath the force of a demonstration. For none of the Christian fathers make the three former evangelists to have wrote later than thirty years or thereabouts, after our Lord’s crucifixion; and all of them agree, that John, who wrote last, published his gospel, before the conclusion of the century, while not a few have said, that he did so before the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in the year 70.—There are, besides, indications in the three first gospels themselves, from their manner of recording Christ’s predictions about the overthrow of the city, and temple of Jerusalem, and the calamities coming on the Jewish people, as was observed in the

said to have been written, and from every thing in the representations they give of the state of Judea

former section, p. 479. that they were written earlier than those events; nor have there been wanting learned moderns, who have thought that there are notes of the same time in John's gospel, from its suitability for shewing the heinous and inexcusable guilt of that nation, and justifying the providence of God in their impending ruin, and from the mention of the five porches at the pool of Bethesda as still subsisting, chap. v. 2. and from some other circumstances. Moreover, as it cannot be pretended, there are any marks in the three first gospels at least, even upon the most rigorous and critical examination of them, which betray their being written since the destruction of the Jewish state, so there is a peculiar argument, that Luke's gospel was composed a considerable while before it. For, it was written before his book of the Acts of the Apostles, as appears from the beginning of this last book, 'The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up,' Acts, i. 1. 2. But he ends his history of the travels and achievements of the apostles there, with the two years imprisonment of Paul at Rome, from which he is supposed to have been released in the year 63. instead of proceeding to write an account of his death and martyrdom for the name of Christ, which by none is made posterior to the year 65. Now, for this no reason can be assigned, except that he wrote it before they happened. His gospel, therefore, must have been written before that imprisonment, in which his succeeding book of the Acts terminates. And this observation shews more abundantly the impertinence and weakness of Mr. Voltaire's cavil, that Matthew's gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, from the mention Jesus is there represented to make of Zacharias, since Luke also, in his gospel, declares him to have spoken of him, whose gospel there is so clear proof was written long before the breaking out of the Jewish war, about the commencement of which, the death of Josephus's Zacharias was procured.

I shall only add, as little is there room to question these gospels were written by the persons whose names they bear. If Matthew and John speak of themselves in the third person in their gospels, Matt. ix. 9. John, xiii. 23. it is no unusual thing for writers or speakers to use

and other countries, of the offices and employments there held, and of the speeches and actions of the persons who are introduced, which looks like the forgery and invention of a later period. For all is agreeable to the accounts we have of the condition of these places, of the dignities enjoyed in them, of the characters, and even names of those that filled such posts, and of the opinions and sentiments that then prevailed there, by other authors.—There is a most striking fairness and impartiality apparent in these books. For the writers of them tell us such things of Jesus Christ, as were in their own nature calculated to create offence, or in the judgment of the world seemed exceptionable, without palliating; and they record the faults of themselves and their friends, their dulness of understanding, their want of faith, their forgetfulness, their ambitious disputes about worldly pre-eminence, their cowardly deser-

this style, both in the Old and New Testament. If they are entitled, *The gospels according to such person*, this is no evidence, especially against universal tradition from the beginning, that they were not the writers of them, and that others only collected them from their sermons. For without examining, whether the titles were not added by others rather than the historians themselves, unquestionably they may signify, that the men therein mentioned penned each the book respectively, to which such title with his name is prefixed, according to the use of the preposition *κατα* among the Greeks. So *αἱ κατ' Ἀννίβαν πράξεις*, Polyb. 3. 6. is, the actions done by Hannibal. And they must be understood to denote this here; even that every gospel was written by the person, according to whom it is said in its title to be. For so Luke wrote the gospel entitled, according to Luke, as may be argued from comparing Luke, i. 3. Acts, i. 1, 2. xvi. 10. &c. and John wrote the gospel entitled, according to John, as is evident from John xxi. 24.

tion of their master at his arrest, and the base denial of him by Peter, who was one of the most zealous and resolute in the party, and the like, together with Jesus's censures and reproofs of their offences upon different occasions, though some of them were sharp and severe; which is a great argument that only truth is here declared.—Further, notes of time, circumstances of place, names or titles of persons interested, occasions of action and discourse, and many other particulars are marked, tending to render a detection of falshood in the relations easy, if there had been room for it, forasmuch as they facilitated accuracy and exactness of inquiries; and yet, though there could not be wanting inclination, as somethings mentioned carried a reflection on individuals even of rank and figure, or on societies and bodies of men in general, wherefore they would doubtless raise resentment, and the whole was aimed to subvert and overthrow the religions then established, with the lucrative trades and employments, and the favourite shews and exhibitions depending thereon, there never was any confutation of the narrative, nor any exposure of them that composed the same as liars and deceivers: as is manifest from the speedy propagation of the gospel in the world, in spite of all opposition from prejudices of education, secular interest, and other causes.—There is observable likewise in the history, an unparalleled and unprecedented plainness and simplicity of recital. For here we meet with no studied excuses and apologies for what might have been foreseen to shock and disgust, no parade of language or colouring of rhetoric to set off their hero's actions or words, no laboured remarks to raise his honour, or

to illustrate the virtues of his admirers, whatever occasion there was for it, no invectives and reproaches against his enemies for malice, injustice, and like dispositions, as much as they shewed these hateful qualities, in their cavils against his discourses and works, and in their attempts against his liberty and life. The reader is just entertained with a naked and unadorned detail of facts, and left to judge; which looks not like fiction, but is a presumption of great sincerity. There is, moreover, among the four evangelists, who cannot be with any shadow of reason suspected to have writ by concert and harmony, an agreement so entire and full, that the like is not to be found among so many writers of the events and occurrences of any person's life.—Finally, as it cannot be pretended that there is any thing incredible in itself in God's having raised up an extraordinary teacher among the Jews, furnished with such credentials as they represent, nor be alleged that they wanted sufficient capacities for understanding, whether such and such words were spoken, such and such works were done as they relate, since to comprehend these plain matters of fact, there was not requisite any uncommon natural acuteness of intellectual faculties, or any artificial improvement of them by liberal education, so there are other things, besides the circumstances taken notice of in their manner of writing, which persuade us of their sincerity in their testimony. For they were persons unblameable and irreproachable in their moral conduct; wherefore none of their most virulent adversaries ever branded them for any vice and wickedness, whatever accusations they have thrown out against them of weakness and delusion, from zeal for their own cause,

the presumption, therefore, from their character is that they wrote truth.—Again, there was no motive to incline them to deceive the world by a false narrative, for both the Jewish religion in which they were bred, and the Christian religion which they had embraced, and of the rise and principles of which they professed to give an account, most expressly prohibited, and most awfully threatened all lying and forgery; wherefore, instead of having any incitement to be false witnesses, even with a good intention, by hope of reward from God, they would be deterred from it by the fear of tremendous punishment from his justice. And then, as to men, what could they expect by trying to pass upon them a false narrative in support of Christianity, which was every where persecuted, but that, instead of changing their religious sentiments and manners in deference to their forgery, and loading them with wealth and riches, or raising them to power and authority for it, they should proceed against them with all civil penalties as notorious liars and impostors, till after various miseries of bonds, scourges, tortures, and the like, they were exterminated out of the world, the proselytes that had been already made by their preaching falling away through shame and terror, as snow melts before the sun.—I mean, unless they retracted their testimony, which it will not be asserted they ever did, amidst all the fiery trial from their enemies which they endured. There was therefore no consideration to incline the evangelists to attempt such a wild and extravagant cheat upon the world, as is imputed to them by those who make them guilty of falsehood in their narratives; and should not these arguments

laid together, satisfy us of the truth of the gospel-history, upon which depends the truth and divinity of our religion?—Let this book then the Toldoth Jesu never more be heard of, or set up in opposition to the books of our evangelists.

T H E

C O N C L U S I O N.

I have now finished what I proposed to perform. For I have shewed, as I think, that Mr. Voltaire hath shamefully misrepresented the Jewish historian Josephus, in the accounts he gives us of his religious opinions, and in several relations of speeches and transactions which he professes to quote from his works, or to build upon his authority.—I have likewise convicted him, according to my apprehension, of misciting or misinterpreting the sacred books in very many instances, and often after a most unreasonable and perverse manner; while it hath also been observed, in exposing this his unfair and unjust treatment of them, that he hath not scrupled more than once to contradict himself*, or to affirm and

* To the examples of such inconsistency which have been given, I may here add another, as it was omitted in its proper place. We have seen that, in his *Ignorant Philosopher*, under the article entitled, *The Effects of the Spirit of Party and Fanaticism*, page 373. he makes mutual persecution among Christians, even unto spilling of blood, the *necessary effect* of our Saviour's words, 'Whomsoever listens not to the church, shall be looked upon as a pagan and a publican.' Yet, in his treatise on Toleration, he spends the whole 14th chapter to shew that Christ hath not established sanguinary laws, and enjoined non-toleration, but preached up by his words and actions mildness, forbearance and indulgence; and more particularly still, having quoted this very passage among the few passages in the New Testament from which the spirit of persecution hath inferred that tyranny and constraint in religious

deny in turns the same propositions, as they suited or thwarted his present humour, and promoted or opposed his views at the time. And lastly, I have manifested, if I am not deceived, that he hath thrown out false charges and innuendos against the genuineness of different canonical books of scripture, with an evident intention of discrediting and disparaging the same, or even of bringing the whole collection, of which they make a part, into contempt. Nor are there wanting, among these reflections which he hath cast upon them, some at least, which are not only destitute of all good foundation, but also have such an appearance of malice and spitefulness in them in a person of his knowledge and penetration, as to make

matters are permitted, 'Whosoever heareth not the word of God, shall be like an heathen, and like one who sitteth at the receipt of custom,' he adds, 'But certainly, this is not saying that we ought to persecute all unbelievers and custom-house officers; they are frequently cursed indeed, but they are not delivered up to the arm of the secular power, and so far from depriving the latter of the prerogatives of citizens, they are indulged with the greatest privileges; and though their profession is the only one condemned in scripture, it is of all others the most protected and favoured by every government. Why then should not we show some indulgence to our brethren, who are unbelievers, while we load with benefits our brethren the tax-gatherers?' pages 214, 215. Which, surely, whatever mixture there is here of false explication, and of that indecent raillery, which is so characteristic of the author, is very contrary to the meaning he affixes to the passage in his *Ignorant Philosopher*. And he concludes the chapter thus, 'I now desire to know whether toleration or non-toleration appears to be of divine prescription! Let those who would resemble Christ be martyrs, and not executioners.' p. 224. A conclusion which ill agrees with his assertion, that reciprocal effusion of blood among Christians for differences of sentiment, was the necessary effect of Christ's words.

it difficult to conceive how he should not have been sensible he was doing herein manifest injury and wrong, and, by consequence, to render it hard to reconcile his conduct to any degree of honesty. I may have left, even in these pieces of Mr. Voltaire whence I have brought my instances of misrepresentation against him, several passages unproved, which might with equal propriety have been censured under one or other, at least, of the two former branches in my method, as those upon which I have remarked. Nevertheless, I suppose, I have produced enough under each head of division, to make good the accusation against him, that he is guilty of a gross disregard to truth and candour, where he treats of the Jewish historian, and of the sacred scriptures. And it never was my intention, as was already intimated, to take notice of all articles of that sort in him, partly because I thought it was needful to study brevity, and partly because I was persuaded that so complete an examination of them might be spared, if the charge was incontestibly verified against him in a great number of examples.

If, then, these things are so, it follows, that Mr. Voltaire's manner of treating the Jewish historian and the sacred writers, must appear to all impartial and equitable judges exceedingly criminal. I allow him his due praises for his ardent love of liberty, for his fine genius, and for his manner of writing, which is peculiarly pleasing; because, at the same time that it is most easy and perspicuous, it is remarkably sprightly and animated. And, further, on account of his possession of these engaging qualities, I acknowledge, it is more to be lamented and regretted that he hath em-

ployed his pen, especially so much as he has done, to vilify the holy scriptures, and to destroy in the minds of men all veneration and reverence for these holy books, which contain the most excellent and perfect rules of virtue, and the most powerful motives and inducements to its practice that ever were proposed to the world; because he is thereby the more fitted to seduce others into his sentiments. But still it seems unavoidable, that all fair and unprejudiced persons should agree to think his conduct, whether in giving such false quotations and making such false recitals from these authors, or in perverting and wresting their words where they are justly produced and exhibited, to a sense quite contrary to their own manifest intention and design, or in urging groundless and spiteful cavils against the genuineness of the sacred writings, very faulty and deserving of displeasure. No person could use such unfair methods with any of the Greek and Roman historians or philosophers, in order to put them into a fool's coat, and bring them into contempt, as he hath pursued with regard to Josephus's works and the sacred scriptures, that he might place them in a false light, and expose them to be laughed at in the world, and be counted innocent, or chargeable only with a small trespass. On the contrary, he would be the object of indignation from every scholar, and be severely condemned, and loaded with heavy reproaches for such abuse of them. For what writer, however venerable, would he say, can be safe, if such unrestrained licence and freedom is taken in citing or explaining him? Shall, then, Mr. Voltaire's indulgence of himself in these practices which have been proved upon

him, first with relation to Josephus, and then again with relation to the sacred writers, be esteemed by any a guiltless thing, or nothing but a slight and trivial offence, because these last profess to shew unto mankind in the name of God, the best directory of their behaviour, and to inforce in the same name, by the strongest persuasives, their resignation of their hearts and lives to its guidance; and because he again, instead of being a Greek or Roman, is a Jewish historian of considerable service and use to Christians, both as to their establishment in the faith of the gospel, and as to their investigation of the sense of some passages in the Old Testament? Surely this is so partial and unequal judging, as every person should blush at, or be ashamed of, who can be rightfully accused of it.

But what ought to be the effect of this detection of Mr. Voltaire, in a procedure so unjustifiable and inexcusable? It ought to convince this author himself†, of his injurious and unhandsome dealing towards these writers, if he may be supposed to have

† To some it may seem too vain to hint it as a possible thing, that what is here said may engage Mr. Voltaire's attention, and impress him with a sense of his culpable behaviour. It appears, however, no more than equitable. For I mention it to his honour, upon the authority of a foreign literary journal, that a Portuguese Jew, settled at Bourdeaux, having published a piece of 48 pages in duodecimo, entitled, *Reflections on the First Chapter of the Seventh Volume of Mr. Voltaire's Works concerning the Jews, or of his General History of the Manners and Spirit of Nations*, where he says, 'The Jews are a people ignorant and barbarous, &c.' Mr. Voltaire promised to correct these lines in another edition, owning it was wrong to attribute to a whole nation the vices of some individuals. *Bibl. des Sciences et Beaux Arts*, tom. 18. p. 509.

been misled by relying on any erroneous accounts of them by others, or to have been so blinded by some unhappy prejudices, (perhaps, even a mere love of singularity, or an affectation to signalize himself by striking out of the more common and beaten path into that of scepticism, or the *esprit fort*,) as not to have perceived he was doing them wrong; and should lead him to purge his works from whatever subjects him to so foul an imputation, as that of falsehood and dissingenuity, or even the so probable suspicion thereof. And surely this is an effect which every Christian is bound to wish, upon the generous principles of his religion, from benevolence to Mr. Voltaire himself, after all the hurt and mischief he hath done in spreading infidelity; even apart from all consideration of the advantage which it might be productive of to the cause of truth and piety.—But be the event here as it will, the discovery now made ought to be improved by others, and may teach them the following useful lessons.

Hath it been shewed, that Mr. Voltaire hath been guilty of a gross disregard to veracity and candour in treating of the Jewish historian and the sacred writers? This should put all on their guard against receiving his assertions and accounts about them blindly and implicitly, whatever prepossession in his favour, and disposition to swallow without previous inquiry all that he advances, the smart strokes of his wit, the vivacity and liveliness of his imagination, and the other graces and embellishments of his style, together with his high fame in the polite world, may have created in their minds. When a person hath been found to be false and dissingenuous in his

relation of facts at some social interview, but still more when he hath been found to be such with frequency, we hear him afterwards with suspicion and distrust; we suspend our assent and credit to them till we shall ourselves search how matters stand. At least all wise and prudent persons do so. And should not Mr. Voltaire's being chargeable with so many misrepresentations of these authors, produce the same caution and reserve? Indeed who can resign himself to the guidance of a writer so negligent of truth and fairness, as he hath now been evinced to be about matters which have any concern with revelation, and not betray a most criminal credulity? Let me then beseech all, instead of relying on him as a sure and faithful instructor where the Bible is interested, to go themselves first, and examine with impartial and unprejudiced minds. In particular, let me intreat the young to pursue this course, instead of yielding a ready ear to his scoffs and cavils. For such, I apprehend, are in greater danger of being deceived by him. Their knowledge being generally more superficial of divine revelation than that of persons more advanced in age, (I mean, amidst equal capacities and advantages for information,) and their experience being smaller of its importance and usefulness to solace and comfort the mind under afflictive occurrences in life, to which, by their shorter standing in the world, and their greater vigour of constitution, they are more strangers, they are sooner imposed on and carried away by specious and plausible objections, or even lame and falsified details, through the suppression or addition of material circumstances. Their passions being commonly more

headstrong, they are more easily flexible to principles, which, instead of tending to restrain them within due bounds, promise them a greater liberty to range uncontrouled. And their desire to be well thought and well spoken of by those who make the fashionable part of the age, being more violent in this period of life, they are more quickly brought to discard and throw off all regard to what is laughed at by an author who is so idolized among them, and has so great influence in forming their opinions, and regulating their taste about religion, without having any patience honestly and coolly to try whether his ridicule be well or ill founded.

Further, have some passages of the Jewish historian, but chiefly many passages of scripture which Mr. Voltaire had misquoted, or violently twisted and distorted from their true meaning, and explained to a wrong sense, been vindicated from his abuse, and set in a proper and just light in this work? Withal, have his exceptions against the genuineness of several books which make a part of the sacred canon, been confuted and manifested to be vain and groundless? hereby all that unjust offence and unreasonable displeasure which he may have raised or increased against Josephus, and especially against the sacred writings by these artifices, ought to be removed; and all that disrespect for those books among them whose authenticity he had attacked, which was created by his cavils against them, ought to cease: and they ought to be replaced in our good opinion, and recover or regain their due honour and veneration with us.

Finally, this detection may even serve to strength-

and confirm our belief in the divine authority of the scriptures, since by it we perceive, that a writer, of so distinguished talents and abilities as Mr. Voltaire, hath been obliged to have recourse to false accounts of the contents of the sacred books, and to the most wild and unreasonable interpretations thereof, that he might succeed in his endeavours of subjecting them to scorn and contempt; and that he hath been reduced to a necessity of adopting or laying hold upon the most frivolous, idle and captious objections against some of the pieces which compose our Bible, that he might compass his end of undermining their credit: yea, to advance into the rank of a more early and credible record than our gospels, a Jewish production, which is undeniably full of the most absurd tales, and ridiculous fables, where it differs from them, or contradicts them, and is repugnant in many particulars, to the accounts of the most celebrated, and approved histories of those times wherein Jesus and his apostles lived, and appears clearly, by every proper mark and evidence which can be urged in such a case, to be a work of a much later age than that in which our gospels were wrote. For it is natural to argue thus hereon. If the Bible is in itself worthy to be rejected, surely such an acute and ingenious person as Mr. Voltaire, with his strong inclination to depreciate it, would have produced sufficient objections against it, without flying to such expedients and shifts as misquoting the same, and straining its words to a meaning which they were never designed to receive, and opposing exceptions to the genuineness of some of its parts, the most void of reason and contemptible. Thus may we turn his

puerile and illiberal manner of attack, when we consider his superior endowments and parts, to build us up and settle us in our faith of the scriptures.

It concerns us deeply, however, who profess a conviction of the divine authority of the scriptures, to remember, that this, if it continue mere theory and speculation, can never satisfy the obligations which lie upon us. No. We must acquaint ourselves with the histories, doctrines, precepts, prohibitions, promises and threatnings therein contained, according to that measure of inward capacity and outward opportunity which God hath given us, who distributes to every man variously as he wills. We must treat them in our discourse with suitable honour and respect, with which it does not seem consistent to be borrowing the phrases and expressions thereof, to embellish and enliven the most vain and trifling, perhaps loose and licentious chat, and raise a laugh by our conversation with such company as can relish this seasoning. For what is this but to make a jest and sport of the word of God? As it is certain, again, this practice is not very friendly to the continuance of veneration for the same, where it yet is in any degree, since it is a certain and evident truth, that mixing things of the highest estimation and value with low and ludicrous, and much more with base and filthy images, strongly tends to weaken our regards for them, or to render them despicable and vile in our eyes. Above all, we must be careful to cultivate that temper of mind, and pursue that course of life, which these scriptures enjoin and enforce, which is no more than suffering the persuasion and judgment of our minds to have its proper influence and power

over our affections and actions. This is that behaviour alone which will give an agreeableness and harmony with the appearances we assume, and the forms we practise. This is the most effectual method to promote the credit, and advance the spread of our religion in the world, which we should look upon ourselves as more loudly called to be tender of, and solicitous about, that there is, in these times and places, a great bias and propensity to derogate from its excellence and usefulness, and to improve every miscarriage and misconduct of professing Christians, especially in respect of justice, sincerity, fidelity, generosity, and like social virtues, to its prejudice and disparagement. But, if these considerations will not have sufficient weight with us, as, indeed, they are only fitted to operate on more delicate and noble minds, that have a regard to propriety and decency of deportment, and that glow with zeal for the honour of God and Jesus, or benevolence towards men in their spiritual and immortal interests, we should all be animated in this study and endeavour, by a concern about our own true welfare and happiness. For, as this is the way to rational heart-felt joy and satisfaction at present, from the conscious approbation of our own minds, and a sense of divine favour; so, it is the way to save our souls in that eternity which is hastening upon us, wherein we are to receive according to what we have done in the body, and to the assistances for holiness we have enjoyed. Nor do any of us know how soon, or how suddenly it may rush in upon us. Of what moment is it then to us Christians to follow holiness, both in spirit and conversation! May this be the prevailing and go-

verning concern, yea, the ever growing and increasing solicitude of the author, and of all others into whose hands this treatise may fall! And I will add, of all, likewise, who hold the same common rule of faith and manners, whatever variety of opinions or diversity of sentiments there may be among us about the sense of some passages hereof, amidst honest and sincere endeavours to understand the same, from which different apprehension we may conscientiously argue on opposite sides of this or that question! Amen.

A P P E N D I X.

CONCERNING Mr. Voltaire's remarks upon the silence of cotemporary writers about the massacre of the infants, the star, the miracles of Christ, the darkness and other prodigies at his death, which are recorded by the evangelists.

MR. VOLTAIRE, in his Philosophical Dictionary, article Christianity, whence also some other passages were brought under examination in the preceding treatise, hath thrown out exceptions at some length against the truth of St. Matthew's narrative, about the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, and the appearance of the star at Christ's birth, and against the credibility of the accounts given both by him and the other evangelists, concerning the miracles which Christ performed, and the extraordinary events which happened at the time of his passion, from the omission of these facts by cotemporary writers. I propose, therefore, here to add some observations on that part of his book, as it strikes so deep, and the consideration of it did not fall within the compass of the plan I had laid down. The whole, however, of what Mr. Voltaire hath said upon this subject, though somewhat prolix, must first be produced, lest by abridging it, I should give any handle to the reader to complain, or even suspect, that I had

diminished the strength and force of his argument. It stands then at length thus.

‘ In vain have some of the learned expressed their
 ‘ wonder, that in the historian Josephus, they meet
 ‘ with no trace of Jesus Christ, the little passage re-
 ‘ lating to him in his history being now univer-
 ‘ sally given up as interpolated. Yet Josephus’s
 ‘ father must have been an eye-witness of Jesus’s mi-
 ‘ racles. This historian was of the priestly lineage,
 ‘ and being related to queen Mariamne, Herod’s wife;
 ‘ is minutely particular on all that prince’s proceed-
 ‘ ings, yet wholly silent as to the life and death of
 ‘ Christ. Though neither concealing nor palliating
 ‘ Herod’s cruelties, not a word does he say about
 ‘ his ordering the children to be massacred on an in-
 ‘ formation that a king of the Jews was just born.
 ‘ According to the Greek calendar the number of
 ‘ children put to death on that occasion amounted
 ‘ to fourteen thousand.

‘ Of all the cruelties ever committed by all the
 ‘ tyrants that ever lived, this was the most horrible;
 ‘ a like instance is not to be found in history.

‘ Yet the best writer the Jews ever had, the on-
 ‘ ly one of any account with the Romans and Greeks,
 ‘ makes no manner of mention of a transaction so
 ‘ very extraordinary, and so very dreadful. He says
 ‘ not a word of the new star which had appeared in
 ‘ the east at our Saviour’s nativity; and a phaeno-
 ‘ menon so singular could not escape the knowlege
 ‘ of such an accurate historian as Josephus: he is like-
 ‘ wise silent as to the darkness, which, at noon-day,
 ‘ covered the whole earth for the space of three hours,
 ‘ whilst the Saviour was on the cross; the opening

‘ of the tombs at that awful time, and the number
‘ of the just, who rose from the dead.

‘ It is no less a matter of wonder to the learned
‘ that these prodigies are not taken notice of by any
‘ Roman historian, though they happened in the reign
‘ of Tiberius, under the very eyes of a Roman go-
‘ vernor and garrison, who naturally would have sent
‘ the emperor and senate a circumstantial account of
‘ the most miraculous event ever heard of. Rome
‘ itself must for three hours have been involved in
‘ thick darkness, and surely such a prodigy would
‘ have been noted in the annals of Rome, and those
‘ of all other nations. But God, I suppose, would
‘ not allow that such divine things should be com-
‘ mitted to writing by prophane hands.’ *

But though I have copied this very exceptionable
passage in all its length at once, it will be necessary
to examine separately the different cavils which it
contains.

*Of the omission of the slaughter of the infants by other
historians.*

First then, let us consider his objection to the mas-
sacre of the babes in Bethlehem and its coasts, which
lies against Matthew alone, because he only hath re-
lated this cruel fact. The sum of it, as the reader
must observe, is, that Josephus, who could not be
ignorant of the transaction by Herod, and who does
not appear disposed either to conceal or alleviate his
barbarities, says not a word about it, though, in re-

* See pp. 96—98.

spect of horror, it had no parallel in the annals of the world, forasmuch as the number of innocent children then put to death by his order, was no less, according to the Greek calendar, than * 14,000. To which he might have added, after Collins, in his Scheme of Literal† Prophecy, ‘ Neither is it taken ‘ notice of by any other historian, Greek or Roman.’ But how unreasonable is it to improve this silence to destroy or weaken the credit of the evangelist, concerning this matter!

As to the omission of the slaughter of the infants by heathen historians, who wrote the affairs of the Roman empire about the time when it happened, it may be easily accounted for. They might not be instructed about this massacre, which was limited to a small district, in a country at a great distance from the seat of government, and of very inconsiderable size in comparison of that wide and extensive scene of which they treated; or, if they were instructed about it, they might not think it of

* I am not sure but he should have said their number, according to this calendar, amounted to 144,000. At least, a capuchin once called them so many; and when a protestant, who happened to be with him in his convent on the feast of Innocents, i. e. the feast celebrated in commemoration of them as martyrs, Dec. 28. begged his authority for it, representing that Bethlehem and its territory could not furnish such a multitude under two years of age, he replied, ‘ He ‘ was certain of it from the Scripture read that morning: nor could ‘ there be any numeral error or mistake, for the persons slain in each tribe ‘ were condescended on, of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand, of the ‘ tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, &c. as in Revel. vii. 5—9. and ‘ these added produce that sum.’

† Pages 16. 17.

an expression that could not have been used by the capuchin - it is a vulgar absurd phrase, unknown except in Scotland.

sufficient moment and importance to be recorded. For how small a thing would it appear to them, that a prince of any dependent state had caused a number of the children of his subjects to be killed, upon a surmise, that one had been born who would seize the sceptre, in order to secure the continuance of the crown in his own family! And how would it seem a still slighter affair, that the king of Judea had executed such a measure for that end, as the Jews were a people despised and hated above all others! Indeed, it is manifest, such order would be less shocking in that age, as it was then an ordinary * practice, even

* That it was lawful among some Greek nations to expose to the mercy of fortune, or kill new-born children, is supposed by Aristotle, *Politic. lib. 7. 17.* who, where public order did not allow exposing children, directs to procure abortion, lest persons should be overburdened, and from Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromat. lib. 2. p. 400.* edit. Sylburg. Nay Plutarch tells us, that, by the laws of Sparta, fathers were required to carry their new-born infants to a certain place, where some of the gravest men of their tribe attended to examine them, and were obliged, upon their pronouncing them deformed or unhealthy after careful inspection of them, to throw them into a deep pit at the foot of Mount Taygetus, *De Lycurgo, p. 49.* It is, however, to be mentioned to the honour of the Thebans, as famous as their country of Boeotia was for producing dunces, that it was among them capital by law for any man to expose a child or lay it down in a desolate place: if a father was extremely poor, he was to carry his infant straight from the birth, in its swaddling cloaths, to the magistrates, who were to put it into the hands of some person, by whom it was to be maintained, from the assurance of enjoying its labours as a slave when it should arrive to mature age, by way of recompence for his trouble and charge in rearing. *Aelian. Var. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 7.* Indeed, the practice seems to have prevailed among other Greek people, even beyond any legal order, especially with relation to daughters; hence these lines of Posidippus, which signify, 'A man though poor will not ex

among more civilized nations, the Greeks and Romans, to expose children in the fields, who were

‘pose his son, but if he is rich he will scarce preserve his daughter.’

Ἵδιον τρεφει τις καὶ πεινῆς τις ὡς τυχῇ,

Θυγατέρα δὲ ἐκτίθησι καὶ ἡ πλῆσιος.

As to the Romans again, by a law of Romulus their first king, as fathers had power over their children through their whole life, either to imprison them, or scourge them, or detain them at rural labour, or kill them if they pleased, whatever public offices they might enjoy, or whatever national services they might have done, yea, power to sell them as slaves three times over for gain, (for only upon their recovery of their liberty a third time, were they to be exempted from their jurisdiction,) so they had power, by his ordinance, to expose any child which was maimed or monstrous from the birth, after first shewing the same to five men, who were nearest neighbours, and obtaining their concurrence, and were only required to bring up every male and eldest daughter, and to forbear putting to death others which were well formed and entire, before they reached three years of age: So Dionysius Halicarnassensis tells us, in his Roman Antiquities, lib. 2. p. 96. Sylburg. edit. 94. Hudf. edit. for he says, Romulus gave fathers power over their children εἰς πάντα τὰ ἐν χρόνῳ εἶπε θάλασσαν, εἶπε μασίγην, εἶπε δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν κατ’ ἀγρὸν ἐργῶν κατεχεῖν, εἶπε ἀποκτείνουσαν προαιρητὰν, &c. And before that, p. 88. Sylburg. 85. Hudson, Πρωτοὶ μὲν εἰς ἀναγκὴν κατέστησε τὴν οἰκητοράς αὐτῆς (πολεως) ἀπασαν ἀρρενα γενεὰν ἐκτρέφειν, καὶ θυγατέρων τὴν πρωτογενὴς ἀποκτείνουσαν δὲ μηδὲν τῶν γενομένων νεώτερον τριετὸς πλην, εἰ τι γενοῖτο παῖδιον ἀναπηρὸν ἢ τερας εὐθὺς ἀπο γονῆς, ταῦτα δὲ οὐκ ἐκώλυσε τὴν γενναμίαν, ἐπιδειξάμεναις προτέρων πεντε ἀνδράσιν τοῖς ἐγγύα οἰκῶσιν, εἰ κακῆνοις συνδοκῇ. After which he proceeds to relate, that he also appointed fines against those who obeyed not this law with others, and that half of their goods should belong to the treasury. This law of Romulus, which Numa Pompilius his successor moderated only in one article, by restraining a father from selling his son, after he had consented to his marrying a wife and raising a family, as the same Dionysius shews us *ibid.* was afterwards confirmed by the decemvirs, in the year of Rome 302. as indeed it is alluded to, at least as in part then established, by Cicero De Legibus, 3. 8. Hence all who

either weak and feeble, or mishapen and deformed, or who, on account of the previous number in the house, would create too heavy a burden on the parents, there to perish with cold and hunger, or to

have pretended to publish their laws of the twelve tables, have given it a place therein. So Francis Balduin, and from him Manutius, '*Parentum liberos omne jus esto, relegandi, vendendi, occidendi.* 18. '*Monstrosos partus sine fraude caedunto.*' The Jesuits again, Catrou and Rouille, in their collection of the fragments of the twelve tables, and from them Mr. Hook in his Roman history, represent the contents of the fourth table, to which, according to Dionysius, the law which gave power to fathers to sell their children three times, belonged, in this manner. Law 1st. 'Let a father have the power of life and death over his legitimate children, and let him sell them when he pleases.' Law 2. 'But if a father has sold his son three times, let the son then be out of his father's power.' Law 3. 'If a father has a child born which is monstrously deformed, let him kill him immediately.' Hook's Rom. Hist. vol. 2. 8vo. chap. 27. p. 136. Nor does Plutarch, though he flourished so late as 140 years after Christ, blame the law of Romulus as too rigorous, in giving such extensive and perpetual power to fathers; he only finds fault with another of his statutes as too hard, that by which he granted a man power to repudiate his wife upon her poisoning his children, making false keys, or committing adultery, but no liberty at all to a woman, upon any account, or on any misbehaviour, to quit her husband, De Romulo, pp. 30, 31. And as the law stood so, it appears to have been no unusual thing to kill or desert newborn infants, whenever they were for any reason disagreeable, or would create too great expence; as is evident from the plays of Plautus, and Terence, and from Suetonius, who tells us, in his life of Octavius Augustus the emperor, that he forbade to bring up the infant born by his grand-daughter Julia, after she was convicted of debauchery and lewdness, and condemned to banishment, cap. 65. '*Ex nepte Julia post damnationem editum infantem agnosci alique vetuit.* As again, in his life of Caligula, he informs us, that on the day on which Tiberius his predecessor died, the children which his wives bore to him were exposed, cap. 5. '*Quo defunctus est die Tiberius—partus conjugum expoliti.*'

be devoured by some wild and ravenous beasts; yea, even to dispatch them outright by the hand of man : and it was both permitted by law, and continued a frequent custom * long after.

* How long after, this abuse was licensed by law, and prevailed in fact, is more difficult to determine. It was the opinion of the famous Noodt, that to expose or kill new-born children was never discharged by any imperial edict, till more than 300 years from Christ's birth, though it is plain, that the paternal power was greatly restrained before that period towards children of mature age, which was, in the beginning of the Roman commonwealth, and even by the tables of the decemvirs, so absolute, as to extend to the putting them to death at any time, by the father's private authority. Nay, that the Christian emperors Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian, were the first who subjected for it to capital punishment by their decree dated in March, A. D. 374. 'Unusquisque sobolem suam nutriat. Quod si exponendam putaverit, animadversioni, quae constituta est, subjacebit.' Cod. 8. tit. 52. 'De infantibus expositis, liberis et servis, &c.' and L. 8. C. ad L. Cornel. De sicariis 'Si quis necandi infantis placulum aggressus aggressus sit, sciat se capitali supplicio esse puniendum.' At the same time, it is, or may be allowed, by the advocates for this opinion, that Constantine, the first Christian emperor, endeavoured to put a stop to the cruel and barbarous custom, by several statutes. For by a law enacted at Naissus in Decia, in May, 316. he commanded the officers of the revenue to receive and educate, at his cost, such children as should be brought to them by their parents, because they were unable to provide for them by their own labour. And by another law made in the year 322. he enjoined to supply with corn from the public granaries, such parents as should be found incapable of maintaining their children. Probably also before both these ordinances, he had, with the same view, allowed the sale of new-born children into slavery to be valid or binding, but with a right of redemption. Cod. Justinian, 4. 43. 'Si quis propter nimiam paupertatem, egestatemque, victus causa, filium filiamve sanguinolentos, (this is explained in notes 'recenter natos,) vendiderit, venditione in hoc tantummodo causa valente, emptor obtinendi ejus servitii habeat facultatem, &c.'—

But it will be urged, the greatness of their number who fell victims or sacrifices to Herod's state-

On the other hand, Bynkerhock, another celebrated lawyer, thought that the rigorous and severe use of the paternal power about destroying or deserting new-born children, gradually abated through the progress of more gentle and civilized manners, from the times of Trajan, or Hadrian, or Antoninus Pius; and that Constantine, the first Christian emperor, threatened any father who should commit such a crime, with being punished like a parricide, or sewed up in a sack with the following brute animals, a dog, a cock, a viper, and an ape, and then drowned in the sea, or some river. For so he understands his words in his rescript, Dec. 318. to Verinus, proconsul of Africa, 'Si quis parentis, aut filii, aut omnino adfectionis ejus, quae nuncupatione parricidii continetur, fata properaverit, siue palam siue clamid enisus fuerit, poena parricidii puniatur, &c.' Cod. L. 16. tit. 17. 'De his qui parentes, vel liberos, occiderunt.' See Noodt, 'Julius Paulus, siue lib. de partus expositione, et nece,' and Bynkerhock, 'De jure exponendi et occidendi liberos apud veteres Romanos,' with the other pieces published by both on this subject. Without deciding in the controversy, for which indeed I have not all requisite assistances, I will only observe, that the practice of abandoning or dispatching new-born infants, seems to have been far from uncommon, through the whole period, from our Saviour's appearance until the reign of Valentinian and his colleagues, or at least until Constantine's death. For, not only does Philo Judaeus, who flourished in Caligula's time, speak of it as a common impiety among many nations, *De legibus specialibus*, page 795. but Tacitus, who lived under Trajan, marks it as something peculiar in the Germans, that they held it a wicked thing to set limits to the number of children, or kill any of their kindred, *De situ et moribus Germaniae*, cap. 19. and in like manner, he relates it, as a distinguishing principle of the Jews to abstain from dispatching those who were connected with them by the ties of nature, *Hist.* 5. 5. Apuleius of Madaura, again, another heathen, who wrote later, under the two Antonines, speaks of it as an ordinary affair to kill a child at the birth; for he represents a father at going abroad, coolly to lay his commands on his wife, to kill the child she was then big with if it was a female: which accordingly she told him at his return she had done, though she had in rea-

jealousy, must have awaked their attention to it, and engaged their recital of it, had it been true,

lity saved her, from maternal tenderness, and given her to be nursed and brought up in the neighbourhood, *Metamorphos. lib. 10. p. 119.*

‘ *Pater peregre proficiscens mandavit uxori suae, quod enim sarcina praegnationis oneratam eam relinquebat, ut si sexus sequioris edidisset foetus, protinus quod esset editum necaretur, &c.*’ The Christian fathers, again, are full of reproaches and invectives against this, as a prevailing evil among the Gentiles their enemies. So Justin Martyr in his first apology presented to one of these last named emperors, even Antonine the Pious, in the year of Christ 140. pp. 70, 71. Nay, Tertullian, in his apology written about the year 200. scruples not to say, that many who were then thirsting for the blood of Christians, yea many of the most upright magistrates themselves, had been guilty of drowning their infants, or of exposing them to perish by hunger, or cold, or carnivorous animals, cap. 9. ‘ *Quot vultis ex his circumstantibus, et in Christianorum sanguinem hiantibus, ex ipsis etiam vobis justissimis et severissimis in nos praesidiibus apud conscientias pulsem, qui natos sibi liberos enecent? siquidem et de genere necis differt, utique crudelius in aqua spiritum extorquetis, aut frigori, et fami, et canibus exponitis. Ferro enim mori aetas quoque major optaverit.*’ And in his first book to the Nations, he says, ‘ *No laws were more safely or securely violated among them, than even the laws which forbid to put children to death,*’ referring, I suppose, to the practice of destroying them in cases where the laws gave no allowance to do it, cap. 15. ‘ *Vos quoque infanticidae, qui infantes editos enecantes legibus quidem prohibemini, sed nullae magis leges tam impune, tam secure, sub omnium conscientiae unius a -----tabellis eluduntur, &c.*’ And, (to pass the words of Minutius Felix, cap. 30. as he wrote only a little later than Tertullian;) Lactantius, who flourished after the beginning of the fourth century, under Constantine, shews it to have been still a frequent custom to strangle or expose children, lib. 5. c. 9. adding, that if, amidst this last treatment, they were preserved alive through the humanity and compassion of any stranger, they were either educated for slavery, or for the brothel-house, lib. 6. cap. 20. to whom I might subjoin Arnobius, and Julius Firmicus Maternus who wrote after both. Nor was even the edict of these emperors, Valentinian,

seeing it was altogether unprecedented. I answer, it is contrary to all probability, to suppose that they amounted to a tenth part of the number Mr. Voltaire mentions. In towns containing 20 or 25000 souls, there are not born in one year more than 1000 children, of whom not a few die from time to time, by maladies or casualties incident to that tender age, before they have compleated, or even begun, the second year of life. Bethlehem was but a small town, of little note or fame, till it became illustrious, according to the prediction of Micah, by his nativity, which gave rise to the dismal tragedy we are speaking of. By consequence, it must not have been very populous. And indeed it could not be of * great extent; for

Valens and Gratian, effectual to put an entire stop to the long established corruption, as appears from penal statutes enacted in succeeding times against it. It seems probable, the world owes the abolition of this savage and inhuman custom, which continued among the Romans after they were arrived to their highest improvement in science and polite arts, more to the prevalence of the Christian religion, than many are willing to acknowledge; on which account, I have been more full in stating both the law and the usage.

* John, in his gospel, calls it *κωμη*, a village, vii. 42. It is true, Luke bestows upon it the appellation of *πολις*, ii. 4. But Epiphanius Haeres, 51. is supposed by many to inform us, that one copy of the evangelists read here, *κωμη*, instead of *πολις*; though, I confess, others think by his phrase *αντιγραφον των ευαγγελιστων*, he only intended to acquaint us, that it was so called by another writer of our Lord's life, even John. Justin Martyr, who had good opportunities for knowing its size, having been born at Flavia Neapolis, the antient Sichem, in the same country of Palestine, styles it *κωμη*, Apolog. 2. page 75. and Dialog. with Tryphon, p. 303. yea, *χωριον μικρον*, a little plot. Jerome, moreover, who resided at Bethlehem in the latter part of his life, in his epistle to Marcella, names it *villam pauperculam*; nay, *villulam*: and in his commentary on Micah, *vix parvum viculum*. It must

the hill on which it stood, and of which it occupied only a part, according to travellers, does not exceed in its whole circumference a thousand paces, that is, a single mile. Nor could its coasts be very wide, since, according to Jerome and others, Jerusalem was situated within six † miles; but, according to Justin Martyr, within five; and, according to Josephus, within four miles of it on the north: and Elam was still less distant from it on the south. The children, then, in this place and its confines, from two years of age and under, who were cut off by Herod's decree, must have been but ‡ a handful in comparison. Why then should it be thought strange, that these Gentile writers, who had so large a field before them, and who needed to treat of so great a variety of events interesting to the Roman government, should have been silent about this slaughter of some babes in a small corner of the empire, for the sake of

therefore have been a place very inconsiderable for its size, and therefore could contain no great number of babes under two years of age. Ladoire, a French author, in his *Travels into the Holy Land*, in 1719, says, 'It is at present a very small town, containing scarce 300 houses.'

† See Relandi *Palestina*, 416. 445. 445. 480, &c.

‡ That St. Matthew uses the expression *παρας*, in describing the slaughter of the infants here, is no evidence that they were very numerous. It is well known, that the term is applied by Greek writers, where persons of one age or rank are universally cut off, whether they be more or fewer.—That men have swelled the numbers of those babes so much, may have proceeded in part from the pathetic and flowery declamations of orators, and the exaggerations of poets, for whose figurative manner of speaking, allowance ought to have been made, as well as from the reading of that passage of scripture, Rev. xiv. 4, 5. in the church, by public appointment, on the festival of the martyrdom of the Innocents.

the interests of a petty prince? And how ridiculous is it to make their omission to mention it, a ground of unbelief, especially when it is considered, that they either, through study of brevity, pass Herod's story altogether; or if they do not, they comprize § all they tell us about his elevation to the throne, his behaviour in it, his death, and the division of his kingdom among his sons, whose very names withal they omit, in three or four lines!

It deserves, nevertheless, to be observed, while there is so entire silence about this barbarous action among contemporary Gentile writers, that Macrobius, a Pagan author, towards the end of the fourth century, in a dialogue which receives its name from the season at which it is laid, the festival which was solemnized in honour of Saturn, introduces Avienus, also a heathen, relating among many other witty sayings or jests of Augustus, one which proceeded upon that emperor's information of Herod's order to kill boys under two years of age, as an uncontroverted fact.

§ Thus all which Tacitus says on the subject is, 'Regnum ab Antonio Herodi datum victor Augustus auxit. Post mortem Herodis, nihil expectato Caesare, Simon quidam regium nomen invaserat. Is a Quincilio Varo Syriam obtinente punitus. Et gentem coercitam liberi Herodis tripartito rexere.' *Histor.* 5. 9. Strabo, again, is equally brief and concise, lib. 16. Edit. Casaub. 765. 'Herod, a man of the country, having arrived at the priesthood, surpassed so much those before him, especially in familiarity with the Romans, and in administration, that he obtained the title and dignity of king, first from Antony, and afterwards from Caesar Augustus. But of his sons, he himself slew some, for having laid snares against his life. Others he left his successors when he died, having assigned each his share of that territory which belonged to him.'

Avienus's words are, 'When * Augustus heard, that
 ' among the boys under two years of age, whom He-
 ' rod king of the Jews commanded to be put to
 ' death in Syria, that prince's own son had been also
 ' slain, he said, It is better to be Herod's hog than
 ' his son.' And is it not presumable he put this ac-
 count of the occasion of this smart speech of the
 emperor, which alludes evidently to the tenderness
 of the Jewish people toward swine, as they forebore
 to eat their flesh, into the mouth of Avienus on the
 testimony of some antient writer, since he professed
 to his son, that his book was just a collection of all
 his reading both Greek and Latin, for his advantage;
 suitably to which, it is found to contain accurate ex-
 tracts from older authors, where, by their preservati-
 on until our time, there is any room for comparison?
 Nay, is it not probable he did so, on the testimony
 of a heathen writer, rather than of the evangelist, or
 any other Christian, since he himself †, together with

* Macrob. Saturnal. 2. 4. 'Cum audisset Augustus inter pueros
 ' quos in Syria Herodes rex Judaeorum, intra bimatam jussit interfici,
 ' filium quoque ejus occisum, ait, melius est, Herodis porcum esse
 ' quam filium.'

† I am sensible, some have paid little regard to Macrobius's testi-
 mony, because they have thought him a Christian; though Collins hath
 only said, 'Perhaps he was a Christian.' But for this opinion, I know
 no pretence, except that he bore public offices in Theodosius's time,
 which is no good reason, since under this emperor, there were Pagans
 both in the schools of philosophy and rhetoric, and in the senate, and in
 places of magistracy. See Lardner's Testimonies, book 4. chap. last,
 p. 460.—466. And there are many strong arguments against it; par-
 ticularly, that the whole scope of the book where this repartee is found,
 is to vindicate the system of polytheism, and to justify the heathen su-
 perstition, and that the interlocutors are zealous friends thereof, as in
 the next note.

all the interlocutors †, were Gentiles in principle and belief; especially when it is considered, that, besides making one of Herod's sons perish among these children, which Matthew does not, the massacre is represented to have been enjoined through the whole province of Syria; while by the sacred writer, and those who have followed him, it is said to have been confined to one town of that province and its environs? His testimony, therefore, though so remote in time, may be allowed to add weight to Matthew's account.

As to Josephus's omission of the atrocious deed, again, I confess, it is at first sight more strange. Perhaps, indeed, he might not find any mention of it

† As Vettius Praetextatus, at whose house the conference here recited is represented to have been held for a succession of days, and Symmachus, another speaker in the dialogue, are allowed to have been persons of distinguished bigotry to Paganism by all who are acquainted with the transactions of those times, the other speakers appear to have been persons of the same complexion; in particular, Avienus, who relates this witty word of Augustus. For in the beginning of the 17th chapter of the first book, he is introduced acknowledging that he had frequently and long considered with himself, why he and the rest worshipped the sun, sometimes under the name of Apollo, sometimes under the name of Liber, sometimes under still different appellations, and applying to Vettius, who, by the divine will, was priest to all deities, for an explication of the reason of it. At the end, moreover, of Vettius's reply, Macrobius describes all whom he addressed, by consequence, Avienus, who proposed the question, as filled with admiration at his fine discourse, and breaking forth in his praises, some for his learning, some for his memory, all for his religion, and saying, 'That he alone was acquainted with the secret nature of the gods, that he alone could comprehend in his mind and express these divine matters.' See chap. 24. of the same book, at the beginning. But I must forbear to quote the original.

in the history of Nicolas of Damascus, to which he was obliged for many articles in his account of Herod's reign. For we are assured, as he was Herod's friend, he suppressed some actions which were disgraceful to him, as his violation of David's § sepulchre; while on the other hand, he attributed honours to him to which he had no title: for instance, that of being descended from a principal Jewish family that returned from Babylon to Judea, when his father was in truth an Idumean. Nevertheless, it is not reasonable to suppose that he could be ignorant of an action that would make so much noise, and raise so great displeasure against Herod as this, since he was a native of the country, and a person of superior intelligence by his rank and education, (for he was of the sacerdotal or priestly race, and bred suitably) and he wrote within less than 100 years after it should have happened. He must then have been acquainted with it, if such a massacre was executed, as with many other things recorded by him to Herod's disadvantage, either by some earlier written relation, or some verbal information; and, if he hath * been altogether silent about it, as the objec-

§ Antiq. 14. 1. 3. and 16. 7. 1.

* I express myself thus, because some learned men have supposed not only a reference to the census or enrollment of the Jewish nation at Christ's birth, in Josephus's story of the whole peoples taking an oath to be faithful to Caesar, except 6000 Pharisees; but also a reference to this massacre which followed that census, after Herod heard that a king of the Jews was born from the wise men, and learned from the chief priests and scribes, that the prophecies foretold his nativity in Bethlehem, in the account he gives of Herod's putting to death some of the Pharisees, who had foretold that God had decreed to put an end to the government of Herod and his race, and to transfer the

tion supposes, he must have been silent of intention or design.

But surely it does not follow, because he hath omitted this fact, which he is allowed to have heard of, that therefore it is false. Many reasons, different from a conviction of falshood, may lead a historian to be silent about a deed which hath come to his knowledge; so that it would be rash to conclude it fabulous from his avoiding to mention it.—Nay, from that love of truth which is natural to men, and from that disposition which we have to correct the mistakes and errors of others, to the disparagement and disgrace of their understanding, but to the credit and reputation of our own judgment, there even arises a presumption that a story is true, when a writer, in whose time it is much spread and believed, does not contradict and confute it.—In the present case then, Josephus's silence about this inhuman measure of Herod ought not to be considered as an evidence of its being a fiction.—He may have forbore to record it from other principles than a sense of its being an idle and malicious tale; for instance, from a tenderneſs † for Herod's reputation,

kingdom to Pheroras's family, together with Bagoas and Carus, and every one in his own family who adhered to the Pharisees in this matter: about which the reader may see Joseph. Antiq. 17. 2, 6. and De Bello, 1. 30; and consult Dr. Lardner's Credibility, vol. 2. book 2. chap. 1. page 628,—645.

† It is true, Josephus hath related many wicked actions of Herod. But this is no foundation for imputing to him so great enmity against Herod as would not suffer him to spare him here; for he attempts to vindicate him from blame on some occasions, mentions some of his wicked contrivances only in a slight manner, and intermixes many

which he must have been aware would be more hurt by an order to massacre a number of innocent and inoffensive babes, at least among the Jews and such Gentiles as did not permit to fathers the power of killing them at their pleasure; than by his other cruelties; from an unwillingness to provoke the displeasure of that prince's kinsmen or friends, and thereby bring inconveniences upon himself; from a delicacy toward his readers, who, he might be apprehensive, would be tired and disgusted by a recital of more heinous and foul crimes in his life, yea, tempted to suspect him of loading him beyond the truth. But, perhaps, more than by any or all these motives, he may have been determined to say nothing of this slaughter of the infants, from political and religious considerations: that he might not, by swelling his representation * of his barbarities, render the uneasiness and discontent of his countrymen under the Roman governors, whose treatment of them was, in comparison, mild and gentle, more inexcusable; and that he might not afford, by his narrative of it, any advantage to the cause of Christians, who pretended that the massacre owed its rise to the report of his birth whom they affirmed to be the Christ,

things to his honour and advantage, which otherwise must have been unknown. *Antiq.* 14. 9. 4. 15. 1. 1. 16. 7. 1. &c.

* Say some, that he might remove any cause of uneasiness and inquietude to the Roman emperors, to one of whom, even Vespasian, he had applied the prophecy relating to Messiah's reign, *De Bello*, 4. 10, 7. and 6. 5. 4. whose anxiety was, after all, so great, as was also Domitian's afterwards, as to cause search out and kill all David's descendents. *Euseb. Hist.* 3. 12, and 19. To have mentioned this story would, at least, have weakened the credit of his own application of the oracle in their sacred books.

and that it had been ineffectual to accomplish his death, though intended to make it sure. Indeed, how natural would it have been for us to have argued from his relation thus? ‘ There must surely have been
‘ some credible alarm, that a child was born at Beth-
‘ lehem, concerning whom, there were great hopes
‘ and expectations that he would be king of the Jews,
‘ but some uncertainty about the house where he was
‘ lodged; otherwise the ruler of the country would
‘ never have thought of so horrid and shocking an
‘ expedient for preventing all mischief from that quar-
‘ ter, as to command a general murder of infants there,
‘ May he not, however, as our evangelist assures us,
‘ have escaped through the diligence of his keepers?’
And how likely is it, that an aversion to give such strength to our faith, wrought with him in an eminent manner to observe silence, (if it be supposed that he has not spoken one word about Jesus or his followers throughout his whole work, as is done by our author and many others, who look upon the only passage therein where he is mentioned, as spurious,) when we reflect, that, within that period on the affairs of which he is most exact and minute, the Christians had their rise in Judea, and had thence spread into distant places, yea, into Rome itself, so as to create attention, and to be taken notice of by other coeval writers, particularly by Tacitus, as unconnected as he was with the Jewish nation, and as superficial and cursory as he is in his accounts of their affairs?

Why then should any question the fact merely because Josephus hath omitted it, when so good an explication may be given of his doing this? Upon the

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principles laid down above, instead of ministring any ground for suspecting its falshood, it rather shews, unwilling as he might be to relate it, that he was not able to refute it, since it was at his time of writing in the mouths of multitudes.—It ought to be sufficient to us that we have the testimony of Matthew. For we often receive facts upon the testimony of one historian, who appears to have had good opportunities of information, and at the same time seems a fair and candid writer, free from all violent prejudice and prepossession for or against the person that is treated of, though they have been omitted by another of the same age with him, or by several writers more near to the time when they happened. Thus, as we believe on Josephus's authority alone many things about Herod which none beside him attest; so we credit many things about the Caesars upon Tacitus's relation, which Suetonius, who was his contemporary, passes; and many things upon Dio's assertion, though he lived about 100 years later, which neither of them mentions in their histories of their lives and reigns.—Is it not then very equitable to rely upon Matthew's account of this action, though omitted by Josephus?—He must have been born probably at the time it happened; but Josephus was not born till more than 30 years * after Herod's death, as we learn by his own testimony, that he came into life in the first year of Caius Caesar Caligula's reign, which was the 37th of the Christian aera. Matthew also wrote within sixty years of the transaction; but Josephus after an interval of 90 years, since he tells us himself, he finished his Antiquities only in the

* Joseph. vita. parag. 1. and Antiquities at the end.

13th year of Caesar Domitian, that is, the 93d of the Christian æra.—Moreover, there is not discovered by Matthew any hatred or rancour against Herod, which might incline us to doubt his narrative of so unnatural an action. He tells it in a simple manner, without making any remarks and observations to excite horror and detestation at him, as great room as there was for them. Yea, he speaks of it summarily and concisely, without entering into any detail of circumstances, which might have more roused indignation at the author of such a scene of distress and misery.—Nor does he introduce upon the occasion, any other of his cruelties, the more to expose him, and confirm his own account of the massacre, ready as most, I believe, would have been to do it, which surely does not look like a forwardness to blacken him at the expence of truth.—Once more, whoever considers Herod's character and manners, as delineated by Josephus himself, must be constrained to acknowledge, it is no way improbable that he should have enjoined such barbarous execution as Matthew charges him with, from ambition and anxiety about royal power and authority. For what must he not have been capable of in subserviency to his own grandeur, who could give such directions, and pursue such measures as that writer says * he did.

* Josephus informs us, that he persuaded Mark Antony by a sum of money, to put to death Antigonus his rival, when he was taken prisoner by the Romans, lest he should sometime after revive his pretensions to the throne and diadem as a branch of the Asmonean family—he directed Aristobulus, brother of his wife Mariamne, to be murdered, though only about 18 years of age, because the people of Jerusalem had expressed peculiar favour and respect for him—he put to

So much for the cavils against the story * of the murder of the infants. As to Mr. Voltaire's other cavils, I may be shorter upon them; for many of the same observations may be applied with equal propriety and force to obviate them, and to dispose us, notwithstanding, to acquiesce in the testimony of the evangelists.

Of the omission of the Star by other historians.

WITH relation to the star at our Saviour's nativity, there is indeed mention made of it by Chalcidius in this manner. After giving examples how stars had portended the diseases of a people, and the deaths of great men, and after speaking of Homer, and his use of poetical licence, he adds, ' There is also another more holy and more venerable history, which declares, that by the rising of a certain star, not diseases and deaths were signified, but the descent death Hyrcanus his grandfather, a man who had shewed himself of a quiet temper under all revolutions, even in his vigorous age, and a man who had saved his own life when he was persecuted by the sanhedrim—He even brought to a public execution his beloved wife Mariamne, and her mother Alexandra, and caused Mariamne's two sons to be strangled in prison, as it seems, upon groundless suspicions. Finally, in his last sickness, he summoned all the chief men of the Jews to meet at Jericho under pain of death, surrounded them in the circus there, on their arrival, with his soldiers, and conjured his friends, with tears in his eyes, to send in these soldiers to kill them as soon as he should expire, that all Judea, and every family in it, might mourn, though unwillingly, at his death. What a monster! Antiq. 659,—666, 667, 684,—688, 745, 768. Edit. Hudson.

• Upon this article I have been obliged for several thoughts to Dr. Lardner's Credibility and Testimonies, Mr. Masson's Vindication of the Slaughter of the Infants as an Historical Fact, and Nouvelle Bibl. Germanique, vol. 5.

‘ of a venerable God, for the sake of the salvation
 ‘ of mankind and the advantage of mortals. When
 ‘ some truly wise men of the Chaldeans had seen
 ‘ this star upon a night journey, as they were well
 ‘ practised in the contemplation of the heavenly bo-
 ‘ dies, they are said to have inquired after the recent
 ‘ birth of a God, and, upon finding that young ma-
 ‘ jesty, to have worshipped him, and made vows, a-
 ‘ greeable to so great a God, which things are much
 ‘ better known to thee than to others*.’ But as
 this writer flourished so late as the year 330, as he
 rests the credit of the fact upon the evangelical his-
 tory itself, and as it is much disputed among learn-
 ed men, whether he was not himself a Christian†,
 like the Osius § to whom he inscribes his book, and
 to whom, in the end of this very passage, he pays
 the compliment of having more accurate acquaint-
 tance with that sacred history in which the account

* Est quoque alia sanctior, et venerabilior historia quae perhibet
 ortu stellae cujusdam, non morbos mortisque deauntiatas, sed de-
 scensum Dei venerabilis ad humanae conservationis rerumque mortali-
 um gratiam. Quam stellam cum nocturno itinere suspexissent Chaldae-
 orum profecto sapientes viri, et consideratione rerum coelestium satis
 exercitati, quaesivisse dicuntur recentem ortum Dei, repertaque illa ma-
 jestate puerili veneratos esse, et vota Deo tanto convenientia nuncupasse;
 quae tibi multo melius sunt comperta, quam caeteris. Comment. in
 Timaeum. cap. 7. sect. 125. p. 325. edit. Fabric. 219. edit. Meursii.

† So some have accounted him, as Cudworth, Beaufobre and Fa-
 bricius, which last, in his Bibliotheca Latina, speaks of an old MS. of
 the book in the Bodleian library, with a note prefixed, bearing, ‘ That
 ‘ he was archdeacon to Osius a Spanish bishop.

§ This Osius, or Hosius, is supposed to have been he who was
 bishop of Corduba in Spain, and, according to many accounts, presided
 at the Council of Nice. Indeed the compliment Chalcidius makes him,
 is suitable enough to his episcopal character.

of the star was contained, although I incline myself rather to † think he was a Gentile or Heathen, I do not insist on his narrative as an exception to the truth of Mr. Voltaire's assertion, that the star is omitted by all other authors besides Matthew, both Jewish and Christian.

Still, however, their silence is no good reason for disbelieving Matthew's history of it, which is attended with so many strong circumstances of credibility. To have recorded this extraordinary appearance of the star, would yet less have suited Josephus's enmity to the Christian sect, and affectation of reserve about them, which is indeed so striking, when all things are considered, than to have related the massacre of the babes, with its occasion. We need not therefore wonder that he has not given it any place in his work. Then, as to Roman historians, supposing them to have heard a report of it, it is natural to conceive they might be less careful to enquire into its truth, because accounts of prodigies were eve-

† This appears to me more probable, from his speaking of Moses's divine inspiration in so faint a manner, *as a thing said*; from his approving the divination of futurities from the flight of birds and intrails of beasts; from his confuting an opinion which he himself ascribes to Moses, though without foundation; from his calling the stars gods, and representing them to be animated with a divine nature; from his asserting the world to have been eternal: and like arguments, of which there is a good account by the learned Mosheim, in his notes on Cudworth's Intellectual System, vol. 1. p. 730. And indeed, if he had been a Christian, why should he not have discovered himself such, plainly, since the head of the empire was now Christian, and worldly advantages, rather than inconveniencies, attended an open profession of faith in Jesus? Of this opinion was Dr. Hody, and to it also Dr. Lardner is inclined.

ry day brought from some of the provinces of their great empire, among which Judea was looked upon with sovereign contempt, as a seat of foolish and absurd superstition: and, again, supposing them to have been satisfied of its reality, it is easy to see they might not think themselves bound to relate it more than every strange phenomenon, seeing it was not pretended to be accompanied, or followed with any events affecting the interests of the state, but only with the birth of a person who was esteemed by some king of the Jews, but was in a short time, without ever having disturbed or alarmed the government, crucified as a deceiver and impostor. To this, add, there is no reason to imagine this appearance in the heavens at Jesus's nativity, was a new star, in the common sense of the phrase, that is, a new luminary kindled in the ethereal spaces, to shine there for perpetuity, and to be conspicuous, from its position therein, through the world. It seems to have been only some radiant or lucid body in the lower regions of the air, of short continuance and narrow observation; probably also, even in these places where it was visible through the period of its duration, seen but at intervals; for the account given of it, leads us to apprehend, it withdrew and returned, or vanished and shone out, according to the necessities of those Arabian * travel-

* The scripture is express, that they who came to Jerusalem, upon the observation of this light, which they either conjectured to be an indication of the nativity of the great person then expected, according to a current or prevailing opinion of these times about the ominous virtue of comets and other unusual lights, Origen contra Cels. 1. p. 45. or understood by some divine revelation and discovery to be declarative of it, came from the east. Now, Arabia is styled the

lers, who repaired, upon the view of it, to see the new-born prince. Agreeably, it moved from east to west, contrary to the ordinary course of the stars, and it stood over, and pointed out the village, and the house in the village where this child was, whereas every common star, through its distance and height, must have left persons uncertain and dubious about both. We should not then hesitate to receive Matthew's narrative about the star, because other historians are silent concerning it,

Of their omission of the darkness, and other circumstances, at Christ's passion.

MR. VOLTAIRE here takes for granted, that the darkness when Jesus was crucified was universal, or that it covered the whole earth where it was then day. And such many have supposed it, believing it was

east in Scripture, Gen. xxv. 6. Judges, vi. 3. Jerem. xlix. 28. and is said to bound Judea on that quarter by Tacitus, Histor. 5. 6. 'Ter-
'ra finesque, quae ad orientem vergunt, Arabia terminatur.' It was, moreover, famous for these commodities of which they made presents to the illustrious infant, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as indeed Herodotus, lib. 3. p. 231. edit. Stephan. says, 'there alone of all countries frankincense did grow.' It appears, finally, to have abounded with magi, as indeed it would have been strange if they had not spread into it, considering its vicinity and neighbourhood to Persia, which was their great seminary. See Ptolem. Geogr. and Plin. Nat. Hist. 30. 1. Accordingly, Justin Martyr makes them Arabians, Dialog. with Trypho, page 303. To call them Chaldeans, as Chalcidius does, seems far wrong, as Chaldea lay north from Jerusalem, wherefore the Chaldeans are described in the prophets, the people of the north, Jerem. i. 14. 15. vi. 21. Joel, ii. 20.

mentioned by Phlegon, a freed-man of the emperor Adrian, in his Chronicles, according to the fragment quoted by Eusebius*, Origen, and others, which speaks of a great eclipse of the sun, exceeding all which had happened before, at the sixth hour of the day, so that the stars were seen, in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad; and that it was likewise described by Thallus, who, says Africanus referring his words to the time of Christ's passion, hath represented there was a great darkness over the whole world, and improperly called it an eclipse: nay, that it was † even marked in the Chinese annals. But surely since Mr Voltaire denies that there is any record of this darkness by heathen writers, he had no right to consider it as of so wide extent. The words of the evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke, do

* I forbear quoting the passage, which may be found Euseb. Chron. p. 77. Origen against Celsus, lib. 2. p. 80. Syncell. Chron. p. 322. and read in many moderns; and still more, a discussion of the controversy whether Phlegon and Thallus intended this darkness, and not a natural eclipse of the sun, in a different year from that in which our Saviour suffered, as it hath been agitated between Whiston, Sykes, and others.

† Whereas it hath been said, that there is mention in the Chinese *fasti* of a total eclipse of the sun, in the 28th year of their 46th cycle, the last day of the third moon, which was pronounced a sign, that a heavenly man should die, as it happened before its time, and this hath been explained of the darkness at the passion; to say nothing of other writers, Pere Soucier, in his *Observations Mathematiques, Astronomiques, &c.* if I am not misinformed, hath clearly shewed, that neither the year, nor month, nor age of the moon, when that eclipse is said to have been observed sooner than it was computed, suit this darkness at Christ's death, which was at the passover or full moon: and that the missionaries who explained that eclipse of this darkness, applied to it what was said about the foretokening quality of an eclipse that happened no less than 600 years before our Saviour suffered.

not necessarily imply this, but are fully accounted for by the hypothesis, which confines it to the country of Judea, in which Christ died, as may appear from the instances above* produced of the use of *γν*, even with the adjective of universality joined to it, for a particular land or region of the earth. Accordingly, our translators themselves seem to me to have thought it reached no further, for in their version of the two first gospels, they call it ‘darkness over all the land;’ and though in that of Luke’s gospel they stile it in the text, ‘darkness over all the earth,’ where the original expression, however, is precisely the same as in Mark’s history, they are nevertheless so cautious and fair, as to direct every reader’s attention to the margin by the usual note of reference, wherein they have placed the word *land*. And many others, both † antient and modern, of great learning and good judgment, have likewise reckoned the darkness had no larger spread, but was circumscribed within the Jewish territories at the utmost, even as the darkness which God sent in testimony of his displeasure against the Egyptians was topical or local. Nor have some, who have contended

* See Part 2. sect. 25. p. 347.

† Among the former I mention Origen, in his Commentaries on Matthew, Tr. 35. where he reasons for the darkness’s being confined to Judea, as the other extraordinary appearances at Christ’s death, were to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, in answer to the objection against its truth, from the silence of heathen authors, though in his book against Celsus, he had appealed to Phlegon’s testimony, and considered it as more extensive. Among moderns, no meaner persons than Erasmus, Calvin, Gerard John Vossius, Scaliger, Le Clerc, Lenfant and Beaufobre, Doddridge, and Lardner, have declared for its being limited to Judea.

for *its being diffused over all that vast tract of the terrestrial globe, where the sun then shone, denied that the words of the evangelists might be very well expounded to denote its being barely stretched over Judæa, so that they have adopted the other sense only or chiefly, from a deference to such authorities, as Voltaire does not allow to have any allusion to it. Why then should we affirm the darkness at our Saviour's passion was universally diffused, unless there was greater evidence such Gentiles attested it, than there is? Though confined to Judea, it was a sufficient testimony from heaven of the innocence and dignity of the sufferer, and a sufficient demonstration of God's wrath against the criminal actors in his execution; indeed more so, than if it had been common to all other nations with them. Thus also, it would bear a greater resemblance to the other proofs of Jesus's mission or authority, which, if we except the star at its first rise, were all exhibited in that country alone, which was the scene of his doctrine, instead of being also exhibited in other parts of the world, where his name was not then known or heard of, nor likely to be known or heard of for many ages, perhaps not till all remembrance of such attestations to him should be effaced and obliterated.

* I particularly intend Reland here, in his *Palaestina*, who says, 'Quod si quis existimet, uti Luc. iv. 25. *παρα ἡ γη* notat solum terram Israeliticam, ita hic quoque notare posse, me non habebit repugnantem. Fateor ita accipi posse;' though he himself embraces the other opinion, because the words are capable of signifying the whole earth, and because the sense of words should rather be diminished and strengthened for the honour of our religion, and its author, and because we have the testimonies of Phlegon and other antient heathens, and of the very Chinese in this matter, lib. 1. cap. 5. p. 30.

Should any oppose to this account of the darkness, the story which is told about Dionysius the Areopagite's having observed it in Egypt, in company with Apollopheanes, a master under whom he prosecuted his studies, and broke forth into this exclamation, 'Either the God of nature suffers, or sympathizes with the sufferer;' it is a story, as was † intimated before, which appears altogether unworthy of credit. For there is no account of Dionysius's having remarked it, and made such reflection upon it by Eusebius, or any other of the early ecclesiastic historians, as important and worthy to be transmitted to posterity as the fact must have seemed, considering how illustrious his rank in life was, and² that he was then a heathen, having been only converted by Paul when he preached at Athens, about eighteen years after the crucifixion. As little is there mention of it in any of the different apologies still extant, which were written by Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Origen, and others, for the Christian religion, though they speak of the darkness, and appeal to such evidences as they relied upon, in support of it, as proper as it must have been thought by them for serving their cause, or in any of the commentaries or homilies upon the evangelical history of Christ's passion, by Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, Theodoret, and others, which we have transmitted to us, though some of them are pretty prolix and full. If we meet with Dionysius's observation of the darkness in Egypt, in his own works, these were never heard of till the sixth century, and are now very generally looked on as spurious and forged, both by

† Part 2. sect. 27. page 371.

Papists and Protestants of the most eminent critical judgment and ability; even there, however, there is no notice given by Dionysius, in his minute and circumstantiated detail about the darkness he remarked at Heliopolis, of his having made such an exclamation as hath been ascribed to him, nor is it related by any before Syncellus, a writer of little authority, who flourished about the year 828. Withal, the fabulous authors who do speak of it afterwards, tell it with so much variety as to destroy its credit, at least in concurrence with what hath been already offered, as much weight as hath been by some laid upon it. But I must not enlarge on the subject, and far less can I tarry to produce the proofs of all this now. What hath been said, may be enough to shew, that none ought to conclude the darkness was more largely diffused, upon the authority of this tale concerning Dionysius.

Now, if the darkness was thus limited; instead of involving all nations in it, and even Rome itself, which our author represents, it is unreasonable to suspect or deny its truth, merely because Greek and Latin historians of that age are silent about it. Indeed, if it had been universal, as it was not the darkness of an eclipse, but a darkness preternatural and extraordinary, which the evangelists shew, forasmuch as no eclipse happens at full but at new moon, nor creates an obscurity of so long duration, it would have been very strange, if it had been entirely overlooked by them all, fond as they were of recording prodigies, and struck as they must have been with wonder and astonishment at the sight of it. But when the case was otherwise, the neglect of it by heathen historians

need not offend us; we may easily digest its omission by them, and even by Josephus, who was a native of Judea, upon the principles already proposed.

After this I need say nothing, in particular, upon his cavil from their silence about the opening of the tombs, when Jesus was upon the cross, and the rising of the just from the dead, which I apprehend, however, to have been rather at his resurrection than at his death, since these things were only in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and were too strong marks of divine approbation and favour to him, whom the rulers of the nation put to death as a malefactor, to be related by their own historian. It remains, therefore, only to consider what he has advanced, with the same view of destroying the credit of the evangelical history, from our meeting no trace of Jesus Christ in the historian Josephus, though his father must have been an eye-witness of Jesus's miracles, the little passage relating to him, in his works, being now universally given up as interpolated, and from no Roman historian's having taken notice of the prodigies, (meaning I suppose the star, darkness, and resurrection of the just,) though they happened in the reign of Tiberius, under the very eyes of a Roman governor and garri-son, who naturally would have sent the emperor and senate a circumstantial account of the most miraculous event ever heard of.

Of the entire omission of Jesus Christ by Josephus, according to the universal opinion at present, though his father must have seen Jesus's miracles; 'the little passage relating to him, in his works, being now universally given up as interpolated;' and of the silence of every Roman historian about the prodigies at his birth and death, though a circumstantial account would naturally be transmitted to the emperor and senate from the Roman governor and garrison in the province of Judea.

THE little passage in Josephus to which our author here † refers, runs thus, 'At that time lived Jesus, 'a wise man, if he may be called a man. For he was 'a performer of wonderful works, a teacher of men 'who received the truth with pleasure, and he 'brought over (or proselyted) many Jews and Greeks. 'This was the Christ. And Pilate having condemned him to the cross, at the solicitation of the chief 'men among us, they who at first loved him did 'not cease from entertaining an affection for him.

† Antiq. 18. 3. 3. I quote the original passage, that the learned reader may better understand the critical emendations which have been proposed by its defenders, and judge more surely about the justice or injustice of any different translation, Γινεται δε κατα τωτον τον χρονον Ιησους, σοφος ανηρ, εις ανδρα αυτον λειπει χρη. Ην γαρ παραδοξων ερσων ποιητης, διδασκαλος ανθρωπων των ηδονη τ' αληθης δεχομενων, και πολλους μιν Ιουδαιους, πολλους δε και τε Ελληνικους επηλασεν. Ο Χριστος αυτος, ην και αυτοι, ειδαζει των πρωτων ανδρων παρ' ημιν, τωρω επιτετιμηκος Πιλατου, εκ επανασαντο οϊς πρωτον αυτον αλαπησαντες· εφανη λαω αυτοις τριτην εχων ημεραν, παλιν ζων. των θειων προφητων, ταυτα τε και αλλα μυρια θαυμασια, περι αυτου αρηκοτων. Εις επι νυν των Χριστιανων απο τυνδε ωρομασμενοι εκ επιλιπειν το φυλον.

‘ For he appeared to them the third day again alive,
 ‘ the divine prophets having said both these, and in-
 ‘ numerable other wonderful things concerning him.
 ‘ The sect of the Christians which is denominated
 ‘ from him hath not ceased until now.’ However,
 when he affirms it is now universally given up as in-
 terpolated, by which he must be understood to sig-
 nify, it is by all in this age regarded as a forgery from
 beginning to end, since upon this he builds his asser-
 tion, that we meet with no trace of Jesus Christ in
 the historian Josephus, he says what is far from true.
 For it hath been vindicated and received as genuine,
 in whole or in part, by many learned men, even of
 late * years, as by Tobias † Eekhardus, Jacobus † Ser-
 renius, Dr. § Chapman, Dr. || N. Forster of Oxford,

* As I confine myself to late years, I say nothing of Huetius, Cave,
 Fabricius, Vossius, Spanhemius, Whiston, and others.

† In libro cui titulus, Non Christianorum de Christo Testimonia,
 ex antiquis monumentis proposita et dijudicata. Quedlinburgi, 1736.

‡ Pastor at Nykoping, and member of the Royal society at London,
 in a book published about 1758, of which is an account, Nouv. Bibl.
 Germ. tom. 24.

§ Author of Eusebius, and of the defence of Phlegon’s eclipse against
 Sykes, who would explain ‘Ο Χριστος υιος ης, as the title on the cross,
 ‘ This is he who was called Christ,’ and refer the αυτη in the clause
 about the prophets, not to Jesus, but to Christ or Messiah, by which
 some chief objections against the passage from Josephus’s character are
 removed.

|| To him is ascribed the Dissertation on the subject, which Dr Lard-
 ner hath examined in his preface to the 2d volume of his Testimonies,
 who, as he agrees with Dr. Chapman, in his version of ‘Ουτος ης Χρισ-
 τος, would read τ’ αθηνη instead of τ’ αληθη, so that Josephus should
 only say, he was a teacher of men, who received new or unheard of doc-
 trines with pleasure, and again would alter τωι θεωι into τωι ιδιωι,

Dr. Gregory Sharpe * and Dr. Samuel Chandler †. Nevertheless, I do not insist on it; it seems to me, indeed, it ought rather to be utterly rejected. For it hath not been quoted by any of the various Christian writers we are acquainted with, till the 4th century, when it first appears in Eusebius ‡, whatever natural occasions they had to introduce it or to appeal to it. It has not so easy a connection in the narrative where it stands as might have been expected from so exact a writer as Josephus. Photius, in the ninth century, seems not to have read it in his copies of Josephus; for he takes no notice of it, as he does of his honourable testimony to John the Baptist, although he had a good opportunity of it in three different articles which he allows this writer. Nay, in speaking of Justus of Tiberias, a contempo-

so that he should only say, ' Both their own prophets or preachers reported these, and numberless other wonderful things concerning him.'

* See his argument from the concessions of the most antient adversaries, where, p. 39. he pardons Origen for his omission of Josephus's famous passage concerning Jesus, by supposing it may have been wanting in his copy, though it were extant in the original one of Josephus.

† It appears from Dr. Lardner's life, that Dr. Chandler addressed a letter to him on his publication of the first volume of his Testimonies, wherein he says he had been always inclined to think the paragraph as to the greatest part genuine, proposed two or three observations in support of it, which are the observations of a learned friend, that Dr. Lardner considers in the preface to the 2d volume, and thinks the whole clause from ἀθανάτους to ἐκ τῆς, &c. an interpolation of Eusebius or some other Christian.

‡ Demonstr. Evangel. Lib. 3 cap. 5. p. 124. It is true, a testimony to it and quotation of it by Vacarius, who lived sooner than Eusebius, was produced by Tenzelius in his Colloq. Menstr. an. 1697. but these acts of saints where it occurs, are, if not spurious, much interpolated. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. 4. 6. 5. p. 237.

rary Jewish writer, he intimates, it was common to all the Jews not to make the least mention of Christ or his miracles. It is altogether unsuitable, in the only proper sense of the expressions, to this historian's character, as a Jew, and enemy of our religion, instead of a professed Christian. And if, to get rid of this objection, we once admit of vitiations and corruptions without any authority of MSS. or antient fathers, as some of the latest and most able advocates for its authenticity in the main have done, whatever is left must be very uncertain and insignificant §.

But, though I thus give up the little place in Josephus, and therefore admit that he hath not mentioned Jesus's miracles, I am not equally satisfied that I ought to grant Pilate neglected to send any account of the prodigies or extraordinary occurrences about Jesus to Tiberius the Roman emperor, because no Roman historian hath taken notice of them. For Justin Martyr, in his apology for the Christian religion to Antoninus Pius and the senate of Rome, about the year 140, having spoken of Jesus's healing all diseases, and restoring the dead to life, according to Isaiah's prophecy of him, that at his coming, the lame men would leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb (or stammerer) be eloquent, the blind recover their sight, the lepers be cleansed, and the dead

§ That it should be rejected hath also been the opinion of many learned men, as Blondel, Ittigius, Faber, and Vitringa, who is positive the passage did not come from Josephus's hand as it now stands, and even, after erasing some clauses, thinks there is an insurmountable argument against it, from its interruption of the thread of the history; so argues likewise Dr. Lardner, who observes that *εἰς τὰ θαυμάσια* is *miraculous works* in Josephus, not merely *strange unusual things*, as Forster translates it.

rife and walk, adds, ‘ And * that he did these things, ‘ ye may learn from the acts made under Pontius Pilate ;’ even as in a former passage of it, which I quote below, he appeals † to the same acts about his crucifixion, and some circumstances then in the behaviour of his enemies toward him. Tertullian, again, in his apology, about the year 200, writes thus, after mentioning Christ’s dismissal of his spirit upon the cross ‡, ‘ At the same moment the day was withdrawn ‘ when the sun was in his meridian height. They ‘ thought it indeed an eclipse, who did not know it ‘ was also foretold concerning Christ. The reason

* It is in his first Apology, called in the Paris edition of his works, anno 1615, the 2d Apology, p. 84. c. and runs there indeed, *ὅτι τε ταυτα ποιησεν εκ των επι Ποιτιν Πιλατυ γενομενων αυτω μαθεν δυνασθε*: but instead of *αυτω*, it should have been *ακτων*. Accordingly it is so in later editions; and the Latin translator, Langus, turns the text in that very edition as if it had been *ακτων* there. ‘ Et quod ita fuerit ex iis qui sub Pontio Pilato conscripti sunt commentariis cognoscere potestis.’ It also occurs in that same edition, as in next note.

† Ibid. p. 76. B. C. Having mentioned our Saviour’s crucifixion, with the perforation of his hands and feet, and partition of his garments by lot, among them who took care of the execution of the sentence pronounced against him, he subjoins, *Και ταυτα οτι γεσθαι δυνασθε μαθεν εκ των επι Ποιτιν Πιλατυ γενομενων ακτων*.

‡ As the passage is long, I do not quote the whole in the original, but the most material parts. ‘ Eodem momento dies medium orbem signante sole subdacta est; deliquium utique putaverunt, qui id quoque super Christo praedicatum non scierunt: ratione non deprehensa, negaverunt; et tamen cum mundi casum relatum in arcanis vestris (in archivis vestris, Rigaltius) habetis.—Dehinc ordinatis eis ad officium praedicandi per orbem, circumfusa nube in coelum ereptus est, multo melius quam apud vos afferare de Romulis Proculi solent. Ea omnia super Christo Pilatus, et ipse jam pro sua conscientia Christianus, Caesari tunc Tiberio nuntiavit.’

‘ not having been found, they denied it; and yet
 ‘ ye have that calamity of the world in your secret
 ‘ books [or archives.] Him the Jews, when he was
 ‘ taken down and buried, surrounded carefully with
 ‘ a military guard, because he had foretold he would
 ‘ rise again on the third day from his death, left
 ‘ his disciples should remove the body, and impose
 ‘ upon the people. But, behold, on the third day,
 ‘ the earth being shaken suddenly, and the mass
 ‘ which shut up the sepulchre being rolled back, and
 ‘ the guard dispersed through terror, without any
 ‘ appearance of disciples, nothing was found in the
 ‘ sepulchre, except the spoils of the sepulchre, (i. e.
 ‘ the grave-cloaths.) Nevertheless, the chief men,
 ‘ whose interest it was, both to publish the crime, and
 ‘ to hinder the people subject to them from believing
 ‘ in him, spread abroad, that he had been stolen by
 ‘ the disciples; for neither did he shew himself to the
 ‘ generality, lest wicked men should be freed from
 ‘ their mistake, and lest all difficulty of faith should
 ‘ cease, which was destined to receive an extraordi-
 ‘ nary reward. But he spent forty days with some
 ‘ disciples in Galilee, a tract of Judea. Thereafter,
 ‘ having appointed them to the office of preaching
 ‘ through the world, he was taken away into hea-
 ‘ ven in a surrounding cloud; much better than the
 ‘ Proculi among you use to aver § about the Romu-

§ He refers to the story of Julius Proculus's assuring the *curiae*
 by oath, that Romulus, whom they suspected, as was the truth, to have
 been slain by the senators, though they gave out he had been on a sud-
 den surrounded by a flame, and snatched up into heaven, had appeared
 to him, and enjoined him to acquaint his people, that it had pleased
 the gods he should return to heaven from which he originally came;

lus's. All these things concerning Christ, Pilate, already a Christian, according * to his own conscience, transmitted an account of to Caesar, who was at that time Tiberius.' And he hath been supposed to hint the same communication from Pilate before, when, having mentioned Tiberius's proposal to the senate, that Christ should be placed among the gods, he says †, he did this, having received from Palestine in Syria, an account of such things as discovered the truth of his divinity. Eusebius also, in his Ecclesiastical History, tells ‡ us, when Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven were in the mouths of all men, or much talked of through all Palestine, Pilate informed the emperor thereof, as likewise of his miracles, which he had heard of, and that, being raised up after he had been put to death, he was already believed by many to be a god. And, thereafter, he quotes a Greek version of the passage in Tertullian last produced, with some periods before and after it, relative to the emperor's motion and the senate's refusal of it. Orosius, finally, of the 5th century, not to instance in later writers, speaks § of Pilate's having sent an account to Tiberius of Christ's passion and resurrection, and of the following wonders which were done publicly by himself, or by

whereon, because he was esteemed a senator of great probity, and had always been believed a friend to Romulus, they acquiesced, and decreed divine honours to him.

* Alluding to the opinion he shewed of Jesus's innocence at his trial, and his aversion to condemn him.

† Apolog. cap. 5. — 'Annuntiata sibi ex Syria Palaestina, quas illic veritatem istius divinitatis revelarent.'

‡ Lib. 2. cap. 2.

§ Lib. 7. cap. 4.

N n 3

his disciples in his name, and of his being believed to be a god, through the encreasing faith of very many.—Moreover, it is certain, and has been proved undeniably by severals (as indeed the customariness of such kind of information to the emperors is admitted by our author) that the governors of provinces were in use to compose acts or commentaries, and therein, to transmit to the emperors intelligence of the principal occurrences and transactions of the countries where they presided. Why then should we question that Pilate, who was dragged into the condemnation of Christ, had sent some favourable notices about him to his master, since we see that the more early advocates for our religion appeal to them in their defences that were to be presented to magistrates, who, unless it had been so, would thus have obtained a great advantage against them and their cause. Further, we know from the same * Eusebius, who speaks of these acts, that, in order to take from Christians all pretence of support to their interest from that quarter, the heathen people forged acts of Pilate full of all blasphemy against Christ, which they dispersed diligently through all the provinces, and which the persecuting emperor Maximin, about the year 307, ordered to be publicly proposed both in town and country, and enjoined school-masters to deliver to the boys as lessons which they should commit to memory. Indeed Pilate might

* Hist. lib. 1. cap. 9. and 9. 5. he is so exact as to acquaint us they were convicted to be a forgery, from making Christ's death to have happened in Tiberius's 4th consulship, or the 7th year of his reign, when it appeared by Josephus, that Pilate, under whom he was crucified, received the procuratorship of Judea only in Tiberius's 12th year.

be more ready to transmit some accounts to Rome concerning Jesus, because his followers had multiplied considerably, and begun to make a figure before he was removed from his government, which was not, according to the shortest computation, till almost two years after our Saviour's crucifixion.

It does not however follow, that, if there had been such acts, containing relations of strange things which happened in honour of Christ, some Roman historian would have given us some account of these prodigies in testimony to his greatness from them. For it is seldom we meet with quotations from, or appeals to, like commentaries and records, in those writers who treat of the affairs and transactions of the provinces. Besides, it ought never to have been expected, that historians still continuing heathen, would give themselves any trouble to search those registers, and to produce from them any stupendous proofs therein mentioned of Jesus's authority and mission, who was sprung from a nation for which they had a sovereign and proud contempt, whose claim and pretensions themselves disallowed, and whose aim in his doctrine, was to banish out of the world those idolatrous forms of worship to which they were enslaved, together with their attendant vices, whatever advantageous things Pilate, the heathen governor, might have been led to say in his commentaries in fidelity to his trust as chief magistrate over Judea under Caesar, that he might explain the rise of a sect which was growing numerous in that part of the empire. There is not then sufficient weight in the objection, from the silence of the Roman historians, to overthrow the real existence of

some acts of Pilate with a narrative in the main favourable to Jesus. Nevertheless, I must observe, we cannot assert, with the most exact certainty, to what degree it was so, as none of the antient Christians who speak of these acts, have pretended to recite to us their precise words on the subject. And, further, it is plain to all attentive persons, that while they speak of their contents, every one in his own language and diction, they also speak of the matters therein declared to his advantage, with some variety and diversity; and sometimes so loosely and generally, that it is not easy to say what they intended their readers should understand to be found in them, and what not.

But be it, that as Josephus hath been silent about all the miracles and prodigies which were wrought in confirmation of Christ's authority, so Pilate had not wrote one word of them to Tiberius, notwithstanding all the positive assurances we have from the fathers that he had, because no Roman historian hath mentioned a syllable about them. Are these miracles and prodigies to be on this account disbelieved, and rejected as idle tales? By no means. Even upon this supposition, they still deserve our fullest credit and assent.

The histories we have of them are written by persons who had good opportunities to know the facts, who were originally prepossessed against Jesus's pretensions to be the Christ, through the national expectations that such a person would appear with great worldly pomp and splendour, and who were steadfast in their testimony to the miracles, instead of retracting it, amidst any prospect of dangers which threatened them, or any pressure of troubles and inconveniences to which they were subjected for it; as were al-

so their companions; for it is not pretended that any of them denied their reality, or accused them as sham and trick, whatever displeasure they incurred of the master himself, or of his friends, by their offences and miscarriages.—And these histories were published to the world soon after the wonderful things which they set forth are said to have been done, in the country which is represented to be the scene of them, or in places which, amidst their distance, had easy and frequent intercourse therewith.—There are no incredible and ridiculous circumstances interwoven in the narratives of these extraordinary events, such as demonstrate many monkish and pagan tales of miracles to be mere arrant forgeries and frauds.—Nor are these events in themselves ludicrous and trifling, of which sort have been the tricks and rogueries of wicked men, but grave and important.—The power to which they are ascribed also is adequate to the operation of them. And the end for which they are affirmed to have been done is rational and exalted, meet therefore and worthy of God.—The histories of them, moreover, tho' composed by four different persons, agree well with one another, allowance being made for the not uncommon omission of some facts or circumstances of facts by one writer, which another takes notice of; and reasonable caution being used that we do not confound all miraculous cures through Jesus's life, and all appearances by him after his resurrection from the dead, as the same, which have some mutual likeness and similarity.—And they come accompanied with epistles or letters, at least from one of the party, to churches or societies of Christians, among whom he had virulent personal enemies, and reproves some for

abuses and corruptions, of which they were guilty, with sharpness, yea, threatens them with a rod, wherein, notwithstanding the handle he would have given them to insult and triumph over him by any falsehood in his pretensions, he speaks in a familiar manner of like extraordinary powers having been exerted by himself and his fellow-labourers, and even of their being possessed by many among themselves thro' the grace of Jesus, as we are told in these histories signalized him. — Besides, not to repeat what was said above, in enumerating the marks of credibility observable in the four gospels in general, the details of the wonders are in particular most artless, instead of being framed with the skill which distinguishes a cunningly devised fable. For there is no gradual rising from miracles where the effect was more slow, to those where the effect was more instantaneous; from miracles where was some external action or application, however inadequate to the effect, to miracles where none was used; from miracles where the change and alteration produced was less beyond human power to those where it was so more confessedly:—in a word, from miracles less showy and striking, to those more suited to amaze and astonish, which would have been a method more calculated to prepare the reader for believing the whole; but all are told promiscuously as they were transacted: while at the same time, there is sometimes only a summary mention of works that must have appeared more stupendous, a minute recital being preferred of those that were less such.—And, throughout, there is great simplicity and shortness of relation, whatever room there must have been for enlargement and embellishment to commend and extol the doer of them.

Further, they were never contradicted by any written memoirs of these times; none such do now exist; none such can with any shadow of reason be alledged to have formerly existed, but to have perished by accident or intention. Authors of that age whose works are come down to us, instead of confuting the miracles, and exposing them as false and legendary, grateful as this must have been to rulers and magistrates, and to the majority in every nation, and promising as the successful attempt must have been of honour and profit to themselves, have been silent, and left them to receive whatever dependence upon them these histories could procure for any opposite endeavours on their side to prevent it. What an impression, in this view, does Josephus's mere omission to refute the truth of the evangelical history make, since he himself belonged to that very nation which crucified Christ as a false prophet and deceiver, and, though not born at the time, was born within a few years after he was thus put to death, yea, born to a priest; one, by consequence, of that order of men who had been very active in procuring his apprehension and condemnation! Especially when we add, that he could not be restrained from doing it by fear of subjecting those of his own religion to distress and misery from the Romans, upon pretence of their adherence to Christ; because, before he wrote, Jews and Christians were very well understood by them to be separate and distinct sects.—Even the gospels, which have been called apocryphal, and justly excluded from the canon of the New Testament, instead of overthrowing, rather confirmed the accounts contained in our genuine and au-

thentic gospels of the miracles and of the prodigies in general abovementioned. For all the writers of them supposed that Jesus had a power of working miracles, and that he rose, and that he ascended into heaven; only they gave such accounts of his extraordinary works as fancy had suggested, or tradition had conveyed to them; and took away or added such specialities to his history and discourses falsely and without ground, as were unfavourable or friendly to their own distinguishing peculiar notions respectively; of his not having any previous existence to his nativity in the days of Augustus; of his not being born of a virgin by the miraculous agency of the Holy Ghost, but born as other men are; of his not having real but only apparent humanity; of the transcendent excellence and virtue of celibacy, or the like*.

Again, the most keen and inveterate adversaries of our religion in the early ages, do not seem to have absolutely denied the miracles which Jesus is recorded to have performed, though, as they lived very near to the pretended time of these operations, they enjoyed superior advantages for disproving them if

* I must satisfy myself with this general account of these gospels, which, in general, were productions of the second century. Whoever would be better acquainted with them, may read Beaufobre *Discours sur les livres Apocryphes, Histoire des Manichees*, tom. 1. liv. 2. p. 455, —464. Lardner's *Credibility*, vol. 6. p. 400, &c. vol. 12. near the end. Fabric. *Codex Pseudepigraphus N. Testamenti*. I only add, for illustrating what hath been said, that some of them began with John's baptism and preaching, and had nothing at all about the miraculous conception, the appearance of the star, the visit of the Magi, the massacre of the babes, and the retreat into Egypt, the presentation of Jesus in the temple, and like matters.

they were fictitious. They appear rather to have owned the facts, and to have disallowed their force to establish his divine authority, and confirm the gospel, by ascribing them to magical skill, (just as the Pharisees, during our Lord's personal ministry, evaded all the arguments from his ejection of demons for shewing he was the Son of God, by saying, He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils) and sometimes also by disparaging them in comparison of the wonders which some of their own persuasion and party had wrought. This is evident from the quotations from their pieces which are preserved in the writings of the Christian fathers. For these productions themselves are * long ago lost; which the

* Nevertheless, the professors of our religion should not be wholly blamed for the want of these works of Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles and other enemies. It is indeed true, that the zeal of some Christian princes of old, led them to order them to be burnt. Constantine, soon after the Council of Nice, in a letter to the bishops and people, of which Socrates hath given us a copy, speaks of his having required that Porphyry's books against religion should be committed to the fire; yea, seems to have denounced capital punishment to every one who should hide or conceal them, instead of bringing them forth to be burnt, if we may judge from the penalty he annexes to the neglect of saving Arius's books, where he appears to make his own conduct, with relation to Porphyry's writings, his model. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 9. page 32. But it was not effectual to abolish his works; for Libanius read them, and Apollinarius answered them about the middle of the 4th century: and Jerome gives us large quotations from them in his Commentaries, even about the end of that century. Nay, there is a law of Theodosius the younger and Valentinian, appointing that all books which Porphyry or any other had written against the religious worship of the Christians, with whomsoever they were found, should be cast into the fire; which shews they were extant so late as A. D. 449. Cod. lib. 1. Tit. 1. De Summa Trinitate, leg. 3. As again, in Justinian's No-

most wise and able advocates for our faith do lament, because thence occasion hath been taken to

vells, we have a reference to its having been declared unlawful by former emperors, to transcribe or possess Porphyry's writings against the Christians; where the same thing is statuted about the books of Severus the heretic, under pain of the loss of a hand for writing them. 42. cap. 1. However, the heathens had here set the example; for Dioclesian had before ordered the scriptures to be burnt, in the year 303. Euseb. Hist. 8. 2. 294. in pursuance of which, it was done in the market places, many delivering up these divinely inspired books to the flames, that they might preserve their lives. Ibid. 8. 2. 293. Lactantius, or the author *De Mort. Persecut.* cap. 12. Augustinus *Collat. cum Donatistis*, cap. 15, &c. As, indeed, it had been the old practice both of the Greeks and Romans, to destroy in this way whatever tended to overthrow their religions. Valer. Maxim. lib. 1. cap. 1. sect. 12. Lactant. *Inst.* lib. 1. cap. 22. Cic. *de Nat. D.* l. 1. c. 23. Minutius Felix, cap. 8. and Lactant. *de Ira Dei*, cap. 9.—Hence, according to Arnobius, who flourished about A. D. 307. not a few heathens in his time, murmured that Cicero's writings were not abolished, (meaning, I suppose, in particular, his books *De Divinatione* and *De Natura Deorum*) because they contributed to promote the Christian religion, and subverted the reverence of antiquity, thus fearing the testimony of truth. *Adversus Gentes*, lib. 3. p. 103, 104. And Julian, in the intermediate period between these edicts of Constantine and Theodosius, had shewed the same disposition with relation to Christian writings. For, upon the murder of Georgius Bp. of Alexandria, he wrote to Endicius, governor of Egypt, to do him the favour of procuring for him all his books: 'For he had many philosophical, and many rhetorical books, and many concerning the doctrine of the impious Galleans, says he, which I would wish to be entirely destroyed; but that more useful books may not be destroyed together with them, let them also be sought with exactness.' And then he goes on to bid him employ his secretary, who, if he searched them out with fidelity, should be rewarded with the enjoyment of his freedom; but if he behaved ill about the matter, should be tortured for his discovery of books. See Epist. 9. and compare Epist. 26. Christians then had learned this method of procedure from the Gentiles themselves, though

throw out suspicions, though without reason, to its prejudice. To this purpose we saw formerly, that Celsus, an heathen of considerable learning and abilities, in his book which he inscribed, 'The true Word,' about the year 170, made his Jew attribute the miracles or mighty works, on account of which Jesus was elated, and asserted he ought to be acknowledged as a God, to his having learned some powerful arts from the Egyptians, while he served for hire among them,

they did not equally with them neglect to refute irreligious writings. Why, however, did they not survive these severe edicts, even as the scriptures did the like? This seems to have been owing to the great contempt into which they fell by the progress of our religion, for which we have Chrysostom's testimony, who lived long before the last of these decrees for committing the books of adversaries to the flames. For he says, *De S. Babyla*, orat. 2. tom. 2. *Benedict.* 539. or tom. 5. 444. *Savil.* 'The philosophers and fine orators—after their dispute with us have become ridiculous, and have appeared to differ in nothing from children that trifle; for they have not been able to persuade over, out of so many nations and people, man or woman, wife or unwife, nor even a little child; but so great is the disregard of the books written by them, that they have vanished long ago, and many of them have perished as soon as they were shewed or published; but if any can be found preserved any where, one may find it saved with Christians.' In this there is, I doubt not, some exaggeration; but it is easy to see, in proportion as Christianity advanced, few would be at the trouble of transcribing the books of enemies, or at the expence of causing transcribe them, which must have been considerable, since we find that among a number of slaves able to read, none cost less than 100,000 *nummi*, or 800 l. Sterling, *Seneca*, lib. 4. *epist.* ad *Lucil.*—Accidental fires too, violence of conquerors, and barbarity of succeeding ages may have contributed to deprive us of them, as they have lost to us many apologies for the Christian religion, as *Quadratus's*, *Aristides's*, *Melito's* &c. and many answers to the books of unbelievers, as these of *Methodius*, *Eusebius of Cæsarea*, *Apollinarius of Laodicea in Syria*, and *Philostorgius against Porphyry*, &c. We read of libraries, even large ones,

being in straitened circumstances: which appears to be admitting something extraordinary. *

consumed by lightening, and plundered, yea, burned by enemies. In particular, the calif Omar wrote to his general, when the Saracens under him had become masters of Alexandria, A. D. 642, to destroy all the books in the library there. because if they agreed in doctrine with the book of God, (meaning the *koran*,) they were useless, and if they contradicted it, they ought not to be suffered: while, these again were so numerous, that, having been distributed among the public baths, they served for fuel for six months. Abulpharaji Histor. Dynastiarum per Pocock, Dyn. 9 p 814. and who can tell what havock mere stupidity and ignorance may have produced! These things may check the clamours and reproaches of infidels, upon this point.

* Celsus's own words, as quoted by Origen, lib. 1. p. 22, are, *Καὶ υἱὸς ἐς Αἰγύπτου μισθάρησας, καὶ καὶ δυνάμειν τιῶν περαιοδῶν ἐφ' αἷς Αἰγυπτιοὶ σεμνύονται, ἐπαίηλθεν, ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεισι μεγά φρονῶν, καὶ δι' αὐτὰς θεοὶ αὐτὸν ἀνηγορεύει.* Yet I have some doubt, whether Celsus, on the whole, did not rather maintain the appearance of miracles, through an imposition on the senses, than admit their reality. For Origen tells us *ibid.* p. 53. Celsus pretends to grant the truth of whatever things are written about Jesus's cures, or his restoring to life, or his feeding multitudes with some few loaves, from which many fragments were left, or whatever things he reckons the disciples, in their humour of telling prodigies (*τερατευσομεναι*,) have recorded — And immediately he makes them works common with those of jugglers, (*γυντων*,) who promise more wonderful things, and with things done in the market-places for a few pence, by those who have learned admirable sciences from the Egyptians; and who expell demons from men; and blow out diseases, and call up souls of heroes, and shew expensive suppers, tables, cakes, and fishes, which exist not, and move as living creatures things which are not living creatures, but are beheld such in appearance, after which he asks, 'Because men do these things, will it behove us to esteem them sons of God, or must we not rather say, that these are artifices of wicked men, and of men influenced by an evil demon?' Hereupon Origen observes, 'You see how by these words, he admitted that there is magic, though perhaps he is the same person with him who wrote several books against magic, but as it was useful to him

Hierocles, again, another writer, and a magistrate, who was very active in persecuting the Christians, in his two books, in which he endeavoured to overthrow our religion, did not deny the truth of the miracles. For says Lactantius his contemporary, ‘ When he would destroy the wonderful actions of Jesus, and yet could not deny them, he † was willing to shew that Apollonius performed either equal or greater things.’ And the same thing appears from Eusebius’s confutation of his book. For though he said, according to him, ‘ It is reasonable to think, that the actions of

for his purpose, he likens the things recorded concerning Jesus to things done from magic. And they would be like, if he had before evinced there was nothing but shew or semblance in them, *ει μεχρι αποδειξως ομοιως τοις μαγγανευσαι εφθαι δοξας.* And then he goes on to observe, how by his doctrine he called men to fear God, and to reform their manners, that they might be approved by him, which none of the jugglers did, and how he was an example of a virtuous life, while they were filled with the most filthy and abominable crimes; though I may not recite the passage exactly, that I may shorten, for which reason I also omit quoting the original. In another place, page 87. Origen says, ‘ Frequently already Celsus, not able to gainsay the miracles which Jesus is written to have done, calumniates them as juggleries, *γυντεις.*’ If this be the case, there will be some difference, indeed, between Celsus’s real hypothesis, and the account generally given of it; for it will be this, that spectators and patients were deceived about the miracles, they being tricks of legerdemain. But it is a most ridiculous and absurd pretence. For there was such a concurrence of by-standers, and of those who were the subjects of the operations themselves, in behalf of the reality, as could never happen without an alteration and change of their organs of sensation equally miraculous; they were done also in a most open and public manner, and had permanent and abiding effects.

† Lib. 5. cap. 3. ‘ Quum facta ejus mirabilia destrueret, nec tamen negaret.’ &c.



‘ Jesus have been magnified by Peter, and Paul, and others like them, ignorant men, liars and impostors,’ and thought ‘ Philostratus’s * account of Apollonius’s wonderful works more worthy of credit,’ he still supposed Jesus to have made the blind recover their sight, and to have performed some such amazing things, but Apollonius to have wrought more; wherefore he blames the levity of Christians,

* Most absurdly. For this Philostratus, who flourished about A. D. 210. wrote more than 100 years after the death of Apollonius, a contemporary of Nero, and relied chiefly on the formerly unknown memoirs of one Damis concerning him, (since lost,) that were then brought to the empress Julia, wife of Septimius Severus, who ordered him to compose the life of Apollonius, which we still have, from them. How silly and ridiculous stories are there told of Apollonius, as the whole are ill vouched, may be seen in Dr. Lardner’s Testimonies vol. 3. chap. 39, Of Hierocles. If there is one relation of his restoring a girl to life, when she was carried out to interment, to say nothing about the probability of the whole tale’s being a fiction, the author himself leaves room to think she was not really dead. For he says, Apollonius touching her, and murmuring some words secretly over her, awakened her from *seeming* death, *απο τῆ δακνυτος θανατου*. And adds, ‘ But whether he found a spark of life in her, which escaped the observation of them that waited on her, for it is said, as Jupiter sent a shower, she sent forth a smoke from her face,’ (a natural token and indication of remaining warmth and life,) ‘ or whether he recalled and cherished up life that was extinguished, the event appeared not to me only, but also to others, very wonderful. *Εἴτε δι’ σπινθηρα τῆς ψυχῆς εὗρεν ἐν ἑαυτῇ, ὅς ἐλεληθεὶ τῆς θεραπευομένης, λεγεται γὰρ ὡς φεκαζοι μὲν ὁ Ζεὺς, ἢ δὲ ἀτμίζοι ἀπο τῆ προσώπου, εἴτε ἀπὸ βελουμένης ψυχῆς ἀνεθάλψε καὶ ἀνελάβεν, ἀρρητος ἡ κατακλιψις τῆς γεγεννημένης ἐκ ἐμοὶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς παρατυχεύουσιν.* Philost. Op. edit. Olcar. lib. 4. c. 45. To read the whole, must satisfy every one to what hard shifts the heathens were driven, when they laid hold on the wonders ascribed to this man, in order to support the cause of polytheism and idolatry, in opposition to the gospel of Christ.

who preached Jesus to be a God for some few prodigies *τιραταιας*, and praises their own reasonable judgment, who esteemed Apollonius, notwithstanding he had done a greater number of these things, not a God, but a man acceptable to the † Gods.' Julian, finally, in like manner acknowledged the truth of some miracles at least, however he disparaged them. For says he in one place, where he is speaking of the unbelief of Christ's brethren, as quoted by † Cyrill, ' Jesus, who commanded the winds, and walked on the sea, and cast out demons, and as you will have it, made the heaven and the earth, (for none of his disciples presumed to say these things concerning him, except John alone, nor he clearly and explicitly, but let it be granted that he said them,) could not change the purposes of his friends and relations unto salvation.' And before * this, ' Jesus having persuaded the worst sort among you, is celebrated a few more than 300 years, having wrought no work through the time which he lived worthy to be reported, unless one think to heal the lame, and the blind, and to exorcise demoniacs, in the villages Bethsaida and Bethany, are among the greatest works.' And should it not be of weight, that these

† Euseb. adv. Hieroclem, pp. 512. 513. who gives us his very words.

‡ Lib. 6. page 213.

* Ibid. p. 191. I shall give the original here, as it is short, while it is, at the same time, decisive. 'Ο δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀναπαύσας τὸ χαρίσιν τῶν παρ' ὑμῖν ολίγους πρὸς τοὺς τριακοσίοις ἐνιαυτοὺς ὀνομαζέται, ἐργασάμενος παρ' ὃν εἰς χρόνον ἔργον ἔδει ἀποκτείνεσθαι, εἰ μὴ τις οἴεται τὴν κυλλὴν καὶ τυφλὴν ἰάσασθαι, καὶ δαίμονιζοντας ἐφορκίζειν ἐν Βηθσαΐδα καὶ ἐν Βηθανίαις ταῖς πόλεσιν, τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων ὄντων.

persons * who professedly wrote against Christianity, and would have been glad to have destroyed its evidences completely, instead of denying roundly that such things were done as the evangelists set forth, have expressed themselves as they have done, though they could be under no restraints of fear from men? for the two first wrote before the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, by consequence, before any books which might be serviceable to their cause could have perished, through a deference to imperial decrees; yea, in times of violent persecution †, And Julian was himself the head of the Roman empire.

Once more, though we have not relations of the miracles and prodigies by Jewish and Gentile writers, persisting still in enmity to our holy religion, as indeed they could never be rationally expected; (for what would it have been for them who were not wrought on by the miracles and prodigies to embrace the gospel to have entered into a detail of them, but to have bore testimony against themselves in their rejection of it, and to have written a history to their own condemnation and confusion?) yet we

* I might also have observed here, that Mahomet, who was almost 300 years after Julian, attributes, in his Koran, miracles to Jesus, the son of Mary, the apostle of God. For, besides making him speak to men in the cradle, he represents him to have formed of clay the figure of a bird, and to have breathed therein, whereon it became a bird; to have healed one blind from his birth, and a leper; to have raised dead persons; and to have caused a table descend from heaven full of food. See Sale's translation, chap. 3. page 41. and chap. 5. page 97, 98. and chap. 19. page 291. with the notes.

† Origen adv. Cels. lib. 1. p. 5. and Lactant. Inst. 5. 3.

have the conversion of innumerable Jews and Gentiles to Christianity, notwithstanding the strong dissuaves they had from the prejudices of their education, the importunities of their criminal passions, and the blandishments of worldly wealth, honour, and ease, against such a change: which should be a very satisfactory argument for the truth of the evangelical accounts concerning them. This is a copious subject; but I must be concise. Behold, then, multitudes of Jews trained up from their childhood in the hopes of a Messiah amidst great earthly pomp and splendor, who would subdue the nations under them, and enrich them with their treasures; in the belief of the perpetual continuance of their law; in the persuasion of the uninterrupted confinement of the most valuable privileges to themselves as the people of God: and withal, ever accustomed to a showy and laborious form of worship. These, both in Judea and in the countries of their dispersion, within a small number of years, became proselytes to the Christian religion, which declared Jesus to be the Messiah, though, after spending his life quietly and peaceably in the employment of an humble artificer, or in the exercises of a spiritual instructor, he had been crucified by their rulers as an evil doer; which, at the same time, abrogated their ritual ordinances, and laid open the favour of God and the felicity of heaven, and other most precious blessings, to all men without distinction, upon the same terms; and, finally, which introduced a mode of devotion most easy, and simple, and plain, unadorned with any degree of that outward magnificence and gaudiness upon which they had so fondly doted before, as in truth it

is very apt to attract the admiration, and captivate the affection of the populace every where.—Behold again, great numbers of Gentiles bred up from the milk in a reverence for various idol deities, whom they delineated under images of men, and beasts, and birds, and fishes; or perhaps even in the denial of a Providence over the world, with a future state of retribution; educated, moreover, in an abhorrence of the Jews, together with a scornful disregard of all their pretended revelations and prerogatives. These, in like manner, within no long succession of years, came over to the Christian religion also, and acknowledged the same Jesus, though a Jew by original, and therefore of a nation hated and despised, as a prophet from heaven, and the Saviour of the human race; renounced the service of their countless vain, and fictitious divinities, for the service of the one true and living God, though a service destitute of all use of corporeal figures or material representations, and of all that external pageantry with which theirs had been accompanied; received the doctrines of a divine superintendency over human affairs now, and of righteous recompences hereafter, even by the generally exploded method of a resurrection of the dead; and paid honour to the scriptures of the Old Testament as the oracles of God, of which the Jews had been honoured by him to be the guardians and depositaries, and in which the coming and circumstances of the Christ had been foretold. This new religion, so contrary to their most rooted prepossessions, those different sorts of people embraced, when it was preached by men who had neither arms to conquer, nor power to awe, nor wealth to bribe, nor

eloquence to persuade them to undertake its profession, (for the preachers of it were themselves illiterate, and poor, and feeble,) though it was opposed by the authority of the magistrates, by the artifices and intrigues of the priests, by the learning and wisdom of the philosophers and Rabbis, by the obloquy and reproach of bigots of all sorts, and by their own vicious appetites and affections not the least strenuously, upon which it brought a severer and harder restraint than they had ever been under before.—And what was the evidence upon which this religion, so opposite to former notions, so contrary to the lusts of men, in the hands of instruments so weak and despicable, so withstood likewise at its first appearance by a most frightful confederacy against it, claimed mens faith and submission? Chiefly the miracles and prodigies which had happened in honour of Christ, these having been at the beginning recited in more public or private addresses by his friends, and by four of them soon after (indeed by three of them within thirty years of his crucifixion, or thereabouts) committed to writing and made public, in the language which of all others was then most commonly understood. But now, how can this mighty revolution we speak of be accounted for, that Jews and Gentiles of all ranks in immense multitudes, should relinquish and abandon their most darling and favourite, their most confirmed and established sentiments, together with all their peculiar usages and practices founded thereon respectively, in an age when science and liberal arts had made a very great progress, and in places even the best instructed and improved, as Jerusalem, Caesarea, Antioch, Thessa-

lonica, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome itself, to receive the gospel of Christ, by which they were to be more controlled in their evil inclinations; when, instead of acquiring thereby any earthly advantage, they exposed themselves to the hatred and derision of unbelieving neighbours, yea, to bonds, banishment, stripes, confiscation of substance, and even the destruction of life itself, in shapes most shocking and grievous? Surely it can never be accounted for, that men made such a change, and, having made it, continued in it, except by their having looked on these miracles and prodigies upon which Christianity bottomed its pretensions to regard and veneration, as what had been really performed and exhibited, in attestation to the divine mission of its author. As, again, it can never be supposed, that men would have esteemed these extraordinary events to have happened, first in the places where they were recorded to have come to pass but thirty or forty years ago, and afterwards in places more distant, amidst such temptations to treat the written narratives of them as forgeries and falsehoods, from antecedent mistakes early imbibed, from wicked and corrupt passions, and from secular interests through the persecutions which were raised against Christianity, and through the loss of various profitable trades and occupations that were superseded by it in proportion as it prevailed; and amidst the ease and speed with which a fraud, had there been any, might have been detected, whether persons were situated in or near the country which was the scene of these transactions, or in territories more remote, as there was very free intercourse and communication

between all parts of the empire, but especially these more celebrated and more frequented parts where the gospel first spread, unless they had truly come to pass as they were represented. Indeed this success of the gospel, and propagation of our religion, so wide and extensive, in so short a space, is an effect altogether inexplicable, in the circumstances in which it was published, but upon the supposition of the truth of the history of the miracles and prodigies which the evangelists have given us. For who would now discard the religious principles and rites in which they have been nourished up, and adopt others in their room diametrically repugnant, upon histories of wonders recorded to have been recently done in this or any adjoining country, at the application of persons mean and contemned, without any worldly inducement to incline to it, and amidst every earthly motive to forbear it, if such wonders were arrant fables? And if men would not, in such a situation, change at present, why should the thing be imagined to have been done so generally then? The speedy alteration in the world itself, therefore, of which there are most authentic monuments in the relations of heathen historians, and in the rescripts of heathen * princes and governors, is a strong proof of the truth of the miracles and prodigies, notwithstanding the silence of Jewish and Gentile writers, still remaining enemies to our religion, about them; which is only a difficulty easy to

* See Sueton. and Tacitus in the life of Nero. Plin. Epist. lib. 10. Epist. 97, and 98. Adrian's rescript to Fundanus, Euseb. 4. 8. And compare even Celsus apud Origen. lib. 3. 10. Not to speak of later times.

be solved from a knowledge of human nature, without saying, as Mr. Voltaire does in his ironical scoffing manner, ‘ I suppose * God would not allow such divine things should be committed to writing by prophane hands.’ Agreeably to this, well said an antient father, ‘ When our adversaries † tell us miracles were not wrought, they wound themselves (that is, hurt their own cause) more exceedingly ; for it would thus be the greatest miracle, that all the world did run toward twelve poor and unlearned men, being allured and caught by them.’

It follows then, from this and other considerations abovementioned, that the miracles and prodigies ought to be counted worthy of all credit, tho’ we have the detail of them only from those who had

* In the same way our author expresses himself in his *Philosophy of History*, chap. 19. page 98. After remarking the silence of all the Egyptian, and all the Greek writers, about the plagues of Egypt, and the escape of the Hebrews through the Red Sea, where the whole army of their enemies were swallowed up, ‘ God, doubtless, was unwilling that so divine an history should be transmitted to us by any prophane hand.’ But we need not be surprized that the Egyptians, who were a most vain-glorious and proud nation, have omitted to relate events so disgraceful and humiliating to themselves and to their gods. Herodotus, again, who is by far the oldest prophane writer that gives us any account of the affairs of Egypt, travelled thither at the distance of more than 1000 years after these miracles happened. And he himself owns ingenuously, that the Greeks had a very imperfect knowledge of the things which befell that people, before Psammitichus filled the throne there, which was no less than eight centuries after the departure of the Israelites from the country. Lib. 2. c. 144. edit. Stephan. page 170.

† Euseb. *Demonstr. Evangel.* lib. 3. To the same purpose Chrysostom, *Hom.* 4. in *Acta*, tom. 3. page 92, 93. and *Augustin de Civit. Dei*, 22. 8.

become the disciples and followers of Jesus. Relying, therefore, on the history, let us rest satisfied of Jesus's divine mission, endeavour to understand that scheme of truth and duty which he hath taught the world, and walk suitably thereunto, in expectation of these glorious rewards which he hath promised, and which he hath assured he will return to bestow upon all his sincere and faithful servants.

F I N I S.

